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INSIDE THE CRIMSON TIDE

JANUARY, 1995
VOLUME 17
NUMBER 1

Inside
• The Citrus Bowl
• Recruiting
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Publishing Information

'BAMA, INSIDE THE CRIMSON TIDE
(USPS 489-470; ISSN 0195-0975) is pub-
lished monthly for ten months from
September to May by College Sports
Publications, Inc., 2116 8th Street,
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401. Editorial office
is located at 2116 8th Street, Tuscaloosa,
Alabama 35401-2134.

POSTMASTER: Send change of address
to 'BAMA, INSIDE THE CRIMSON
TIDE, P.O. Box 6104, Tuscaloosa, AL
35486-6104.

Second class postage paid at Tuscaloosa,
Alabama, and at additional mailing office.
Subscription rate is \$35.00 per year. Foreign
subscriptions \$10.00 per additional. Change
of address: Six weeks advance notice, and
old address as well as new required. Address
all correspondence to: Post Office Box 6104,
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35486-6104. Not re-
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UPDATES ON ALL BAMA SPORTS

Updated weekly by 7 p.m. CT each Sunday and within an hour of the
completion of men's basketball games (Selection 4)

RECRUITING INFORMATION

Updated weekly by 7 p.m. CT Sunday, daily beginning Jan. 4 (Selection 5)

A service of 'BAMA Magazine
2116 8th Street Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401
(205) 345-5074

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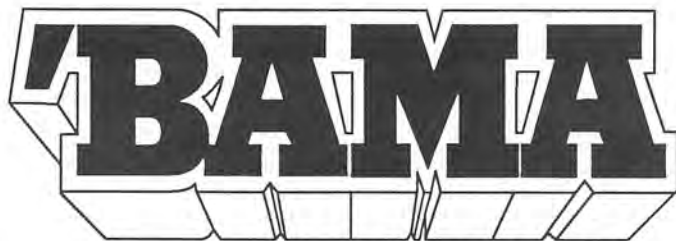
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(904) 372-1215

Gainesville, FL 32604
FAX (904) 372-2283

'BAMA, Inside The Crimson Tide/JANUARY '95



INSIDE THE CRIMSON TIDE

JANUARY, 1995

VOLUME 17, NUMBER 1

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On the cover: Alabama's 1994 captains (left to right) Tarrant Lynch, Jay Barker, Tommy Johnson and Sam Shade lead the Tide for a final time in this year's Citrus Bowl.

Barry Fikes Photo



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Although the Citrus Bowl is a minor bowl, it matches the runner-up for the Southeastern Conference championship against the number two team from the Big Ten. Alabama and Ohio State rank in the upper echelon of college football and they'll meet for the third time on January 2. by Kirk McNair

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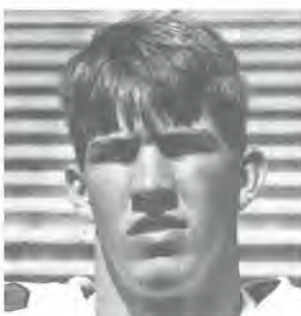
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Senior guard Artie Griffin is in his second year at Alabama after a fine junior college basketball career, and he thinks the 1994-95 Crimson Tide can be a very good team. However, for that to happen Griffin is going to have to have a big year. by John Barnes

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Tide Focuses On Ohio State

by Kirk McNair

Citrus Bowl matches two of college football's most tradition-rich programs

If Alabama takes the lead on Ohio State in the Citrus Bowl, don't expect Crimson Tide Head Coach Gene Stallings to pull a Lee Corso. Corso, best known as a panelist on ESPN's "Game Day," was once a college football coach (overall record: 73-86-6), including head coach at Indiana in 1976. The Hoosiers took a 7-6 lead on Ohio State that season, the first time in over 20 years Indiana had been ahead of the Buckeyes. Corso stopped the game and had a team picture made. (Ohio State went on to a 47-7 win.)

Stallings took care of getting the 1994 Alabama team photograph made before Bama left campus following a practice the morning of December 23. The team was to re-assemble in Orlando on December 26 and resume practice December 27.

Alabama will meet Ohio State, runner-up in the Big Ten, at 1 p.m. EST (noon central) Monday, January 2, with television coverage by ABC. Ohio State went to Florida December 18 to begin practice for the Citrus Bowl.

More than getting the team picture taken, Stallings hopes he got his football team ready for what should be a very difficult game. The photograph was a snap, but, as Corso could attest, beating Ohio State rarely is. "We've got a lot to get done, but we don't want practice to be drudgery for the players," Stallings said as preparation got under way. Nevertheless, a benefit of having a bowl game is extra practice time, particularly for those younger players who have had little or no game experience and who have performed primarily on the scout team during the season. The extra work time allowed in bowl practice gives those players a leg up for when spring training begins in March.

Alabama should be healthy for the game. Quarterback Jay Barker suffered a shoulder bruise in the final game, but has had no ill effects and is back to 100 per cent after the team had a 10-day layoff. And defensive end Vann Bodden, who missed the final two games with a knee injury, was back working when the team resumed practice.



Much of Alabama's offense this year has been the durable work of senior halfback Sherman Williams. Williams didn't break any long runs, but he was a consistent ground-gainer for the Bama offense and has moved high up the ladder of the Crimson Tide's all-time leading running backs.

Barry Fikes Photo

Ohio State's early departure for the bowl site is a Big Ten tradition. While Alabama was having its early practices in relatively good weather in Tuscaloosa, teams from the midwest usually leave that climate at the earliest possibility. Dave Brungard, who was a sophomore star for Ohio State's 1968 national championship team before transferring to Alabama to finish out his career, said that when the '68 Buckeyes went to Pasadena for the Rose Bowl that the players were taped on the airplane so they would be ready to go straight to practice upon arrival.

Although Alabama has been in 46 bowl games, and, prior to this season, 12 different bowl games, this is Bama's first ever Citrus Bowl. It is the second consecutive year for Alabama to play in a minor Florida bowl, but circumstances this season are a bit different than last year. For one thing, and probably the most important thing, Ohio State is a much better football team than the North Carolina squad Alabama defeated in the Gator Bowl last year.

There is a suggestion that Ohio State will be in a better frame of mind than Alabama for the Citrus Bowl. After some early setbacks, the Buckeyes had a good run down the end of the season, including Ohio State's first victory over Michigan in six years. The Buckeyes finished second in the Big Ten to earn the Citrus Bowl berth. Alabama, on the other hand, lost its way into the Citrus Bowl. Bama's disappointing 24-23 defeat at the hands of Florida in the Southeastern Conference Championship Game moved the Tide out of New Orleans and an outside chance at the national championship into the runner-up bowl. However, on balance, the 1994 season in which Bama has managed an 11-1 record, is better than the 1993 season, when Bama went into the Gator Bowl with an 8-3-1 mark, including losses in its two previous games.

Most Buckeyes are also pleased that John Cooper has been affirmed as the Ohio State coach for the foreseeable future. Oddly, both

Cooper and Stallings signed contract renewals in recent weeks, although the circumstances were quite different. Stallings, the head coach at Alabama for five years, had agreed to the terms of a contract extension through the 1998 season nearly a year ago, but just got around to signing the papers late this season. Cooper, somewhat beleaguered in his seven years, was offered a contract extension after interviewing for the LSU post.

Almost since the beginning of his career at Ohio State, there has been a segment of Buckeyes' fans who have called for his head. Cooper lost 10 games in his first two years and his failure to beat Michigan in his first six years was a major aggravation to Ohio State faithful. He has a record of 54-25-4 with the Buckeyes. Prior to going to Ohio State he was a successful head coach at Tulsa and at Arizona State.

Stallings, on the other hand, has been a favorite of Alabama fans since he got the program untracked after his third game. After starting his Bama career with an 0-3 record

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(the three losses by a total of eight points and all the result of errors in the kicking game), Stallings has managed an overall record of 51-10-1, a winning percentage of .830, in his nearly five years.

There is a school of thought that players get over a tough loss much more quickly than fans do, and Bama players do have a tough one to get over. But, as

Stallings frequently points out, "When a player has only 13 games a year, he's going to be ready to play every one of them." And Alabama players have pointed out that they would be much more disappointed about the loss to Florida if Bama had not played well.

Unlike North Carolina last year, Ohio State doesn't have the added incentive of playing against the defending national champions. And the Buckeyes are not play-

ing a team with infinitely more football tradition, as were the Tar Heels. Ohio State has been a dominant force in the Big Ten for many, many years, has won national championships, has a legendary coach (Woody Hayes) in its history, and has a fine bowl tradition with 26 appearances, 15 of them in major bowls (indeed, the most major, the Rose Bowl). And Ohio State isn't far from joining Michigan (746), Notre Dame (729) and Alabama (702) in the stratosphere of major college football winning. Ohio State has 668 all-time victories, seventh best, and ahead of such football powers as Oklahoma, Tennessee and Southern Cal.

Alabama, of course, has the most bowl appearances and the most bowl wins, 26. Southern Cal is right behind Bama in bowl wins with 23 and is just ahead of Bama in major bowl wins, 19 to 18, and Southern Cal will almost certainly pick up a major bowl win this year in the Cotton Bowl.

Alabama players have seemed enthusiastic in preparation for the Citrus Bowl. The seniors certainly want to go out with a win, not just to finish on a good note, but also because a win would give this senior class a record of 45-5-1. The 44 wins in a four-year period equals the previous best in Alabama history, the 44-4-0 record by the class from 1977 through 1980.

Incidentally, that class that finished in 1980 played in the first Alabama-Ohio State game. The 1977 Tide defeated Ohio State 35-6 in the Sugar Bowl. That was the year that Texas was ranked first, Oklahoma second and Alabama third. Oklahoma lost to Arkansas in the Orange Bowl, fifth-ranked Notre Dame beat Texas in the Cotton Bowl, and the Irish poll-vaulted the Tide to win the national championship. Alabama's other game against Ohio State was in the Kickoff Classic in Giants Stadium to start the 1986 season. Alabama took a hard-fought 16-10 win despite the poor play of a sophomore outside linebacker. Derrick Thomas seemed absolutely lost as he was in on pass defense and Ohio State made a drive towards a potential winning touchdown late in the game.

This class of seniors has been a part of three teams with 10 or more victories in a season, part of Alabama's national record of 24 such seasons. The team this year is one of 10 that have won at least 11 games and has a chance to be the third Alabama team to win 12 or more games in a year.

Alabama and Ohio State have similarities. Both are basically I formation teams on offense and both play ball control. Both are aggressive defensive teams



Junior defensive tackle Shannon Brown was a big play man for the Crimson Tide this year, his first as a starter after having been a top back-up performer a year ago.

Steven Fikes Photo

operating primarily out of a 4-3 defense.

Bama will try first to go by land, and, particularly, on the legs of senior halfback Sherman Williams. Williams was the all-purpose yardage leader in the Southeastern Conference and had 1,341 yards rushing, second best in Bama history, despite having only eight runs of 20 yards or more and not having a run longer than 32 yards. While Williams is a small back, the Buckeyes counter with 6-3, 230-pound junior tailback Eddie George, who rushed for 1,353 yards and 12 touchdowns, averaging 5.2 yards per carry.

Alabama's offensive line hasn't gotten much credit this season, although the front played pretty well through most of the season. Senior guard Jon Stevenson received some all-star recognition, but nothing like that of Ohio State offensive tackle Corey Stringer. Stringer, a 6-5, 315-pound junior, is a two-time All-America who is considered by some to be the nation's finest offensive lineman. The Ohio State offensive line is one of the bigger ones Alabama's defense will have matched up against as the Buckeyes average 6-4, 290. That's small by Mississippi State standards, but not by many others. By comparison, Alabama averages 6-4, 272.

Alabama has had good success in the passing game this year, primarily because of the exceptional senior year of quarterback Jay Barker. Barker finished the year with a host of honors and just about every Alabama career passing record. Although the Alabama receiving corps was considered an area of concern prior to the start of the season (owing the loss of starters David Palmer and Kevin Lee to the National Football League), Curtis Brown came back from knee surgery to pull down 39 passes for 631 yards and six touchdowns and Toderick Malone had 26 catches for 459 yards.

Ohio State quarterback Bobby Hoying, a 6-4, 222-pound junior, completed 58 per cent of his passes (159 of 274) for 2,155 yards and 17 touchdowns. He threw 13 interceptions. The Buckeyes share the wealth among receivers. Senior split end Joey Galloway (who is also a dangerous kick return man) had 36 catches, senior flanker Chris Sanders 35, and back-up flanker Buster Tillman, a sophomore, had 33 grabs.

Alabama's defense has struggled at times this year. This was the first season for the switch to a four-man defensive front after a 25-year history of being in a three- or five-man defensive line. However, as Florida Head Coach Steve Spurrier said after the SEC Championship Game, "It's not fun to play against that defense."

Top performers for Bama have been defen-



John Cooper

sive linemen Shannon Brown and Dameian Jeffries, linebacker John Walters and cornerback Tommy Johnson.

Ohio State has an exceptional middle

linebacker in 6-2, 243-pound junior Lorenzo Styles, who has been in on 125 tackles this year. Defensive end Matt Finkes (6-2, 258, sophomore) may be licking his chops after watching Florida's pass rush against Bama. Finkes has 11 pass sacks this year. Seniors Marlon Kerner at cornerback and Tim Patillo at safety head up a strong secondary.

Bama has gotten better in kickoff coverage and returns as the year has gone by, which was the primary weakness in the overall kicking game. Placekicker Michael Proctor and punter Bryne Diehl are solid, and the Tide has done a particularly good job on rushing kickers, turning in a total of nine blocked kicks. Ohio State also has a strong kicking game. Galloway averaged over 26 yards per kickoff return (including one for a touchdown), while the Buckeyes held opponents to under 17 yards per return. Galloway also averaged 10 yards on punt returns and Ohio State punt coverage is also good. Scott Terna averaged 41.9 yards per punt and field goal kicker Josh Jackson was 13-16 on field goal attempts (the same figures as Proctor's) with a long of 38 yards. And the Buckeyes blocked six kicks (half of them, two punts and a field goal, by Finkes).

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Tide Offense

SE- 85	Curtis Brown
19	Chad Key
LT- 60	Joey Harville
77	Joel Holliday
LG- 64	Maurice Belser
79	Jeremy Pennington
C- 71	John Causey
69	Jon Stevenson
RG- 69	Jon Stevenson
58	Will Friend
RT- 74	Kareem McNeal
72	Pete DiMario
TE- 38	Patrick Hape
5	Tony Johnson
QB- 7	Jay Barker
14	Brian Burgdorf
HB- 20	Sherman Williams
29	Dennis Riddle
FB- 45	Tarrant Lynch
33	Ed Scissum
FL- 80	Toderick Malone
1	Marcell West

SPECIALISTS: PUNTER-12 Bryne Diehl; KICKOFF-15 William Watts; PLACEMENT-3 Michael Proctor; HOLDER-12 Bryne Diehl; PUNT SNAPPER-65 Jackson Cook; PLACEMENT SNAPPER-88 Chester Lewis; KICKOFF RETURN-20 Sherman Williams, 1 Marcell West, 80 Toderick Malone; PUNT RETURN-2 Deshea Townsend, 80 Toderick Malone, 10 Tommy Johnson

Alabama Facts

Offense: Pro-I
Average Offensive Size
Line: 6-4, 272
Backs & Receivers: 6-1, 198
Offensive Starters By Class
5 seniors, 4 juniors, 2 sophs
Defense: 4-3
Average Defensive Size
Line: 6-4, 274
Linebackers: 6-2, 222
Secondary: 5-11, 185
Defensive Starters By Class
6 seniors, 3 juniors, 1 soph,
1 freshman

Buckeye Offense

SE- 7	Joey Galloway
83	Terry Glenn
LT- 75	Orlando Pace
64	Mike Dully
LG- 72	Jamie Sumner
77	Eric Moss
C- 65	Juan Porter
50	Eric Gohlstein
RG- 57	LeShun Daniels
74	Greg Kuszmaul
RT- 78	Korey Stringer
79	Larry Waldon
TE- 89	D.J. Jones
80	Rickey Dudley
QB- 14	Bobby Hoying
8	Stanley Jackson
TB- 27	Eddie George
29	Pepe Pearson
FB- 37	Nicky Sualua
39	Matt Calhoun
FL- 17	Chris Sanders
12	Buster Tillman

SPECIALISTS: PUNTER-23 Scott Terna; KICKOFF-38 Matt Malfatt; PLACEMENT-9 Josh Jackson; HOLDER-23 Scott Terna; SNAPPER-53 Scott Lynch; KICKOFF RETURN-7 Joey Galloway, 24 Shawn Springs; PUNT RETURN-7 Joey Galloway

Tide Defense

LE- 91	Dameian Jeffries
94	Kendrick Burton
LT- 75	Shannon Brown
96	Brian Thornton
RT- 95	Matt Parker
78	Ozell Powell
RE- 44	Darrell Blackburn
95	Kelvin Moore
SLB- 90	John Walters
36	Andre Royal
MLB- 52	Michael Rogers
92	Tyrell Buckner
WLB- 87	Dwayne Rudd
41	Ralph Staten
LCB- 10	Tommy Johnson
11	Brad Ford
RCB- 2	Deshea Townsend
40	Mickey Conn
SS- 31	Sam Shade
13	Cedric Samuel
S- 22	Willie Gaston
18	John David Phillips

Ohio State Facts

Offense: Pro-I
Average Offensive Size
Line: 6-4, 290
Backs & Receivers: 6-1, 210
Offensive Starters By Class
2 seniors, 5 juniors, 2 sophs,
2 freshmen
Defense: 4-3
Average Defensive Size
Line: 6-4, 264
Linebackers: 6-3, 231
Secondary: 5-11, 186
Defensive Starters By Class
4 seniors, 2 juniors, 4 sophs,
1 freshman

Buckeye Defense

DE- 92	Matt Finkes
97	John Day
DT- 56	Randall Brown
70	Matt Bonhaus
NG- 99	Luke Fickell
77	Pete Beckman
DE- 94	Mike Vrabel
54	Brian Stoughton
SLB- 30	Greg Bellisari
16	Preston Harrison
MLB- 90	Lorenzo Styles
55	Will Connery
WLB- 84	Craig Powell
43	Ryan Miller
LCB- 24	Shawn Springs
34	Rob Kelly
RCB- 46	Marlon Kerner
2	Ty Howard
SS- 9	Tito Paul
26	Anthony Gwinn
S- 21	Tim Patillo
47	Dennis Maag

Alabama-Ohio State Comparison

TIDE RESULTS (11-1, SEC 8-1)

Bama 42, Chattanooga 13
Bama 17, Vanderbilt 7
Bama 13, Arkansas 6
Bama 20, Tulane 10
Bama 29, Georgia 28
Bama 14, Southern Miss 6
Bama 17, Tennessee 13
Bama 21, Ole Miss 10
Bama 35, LSU 17
Bama 29, Mississippi State 25
Bama 21, Auburn 14
Florida 24, Bama 23

OFFENSE

Average Points Per Game
Touchdowns
Rush-Pass-Other
Field Goals Made-Attempted
First Downs
Rush-Pass-Penalty
Rushing Yards
Average Yards Rushing Per Game
Rushing Plays
Average Gain Per Rush
Passing Yards
Averages Yards Passing Per Game
Pass Attempts
Pass Completions
Percentage
Had Intercepted
Average Gain Per Pass
Average Gain Per Completion
Total Offensive Yards
Average Yards Per Game
Average Yards Per Play
Kickoff Returns-Yards-Average
Punt Returns-Yards-Average
Fumbles-Number Lost
Penalties-Yards
Punts-Average
Had Blocked
Possession Down Conversions
Efficiency

DEFENSE

Average Points Allowed Per Game
Touchdowns Allowed
Rush-Pass-Other
Field Goals Made-Attempted
First Downs Allowed
Rush-Pass-Penalty
Rushing Yards Allowed
Average Rushing Per Game
Opponent Rushes
Gain Per Rush
Passing Yards Allowed
Average Passing Per Game
Opponent Passes
Opponent Completions
Percentage
Intercepted
Average Gain Per Pass
Average Gain Per Completion
Total Offense Allowed
Average Per Game Allowed
Average Per Play Allowed
Kickoff Returns-Yards-Average
Punt Returns-Yards-Average
Opponent Punts Blocked
Opponents Fumbles-Lost
Opponent Possession Down Conversions
Efficiency

BUCKEYES RESULTS (9-3, Big Ten 6-2)

OSU 34, Fresno State 10
Washington 25, OSU 16
OSU 27, Pittsburgh 3
OSU 52, Houston 0
OSU 17, Northwestern 15
Illinois 24, OSU 10
OSU 23, Michigan State 7
OSU 48, Purdue 14
Penn State 63, OSU 14
OSU 24, Wisconsin 3
OSU 32, Indiana 17
OSU 22, Michigan 6

TIDE

23.4
35
16-14-5
13-16
230
132-86-12
1956
163.0
573
3.4
2105
175.4
244
146
59.8
7
8.6
14.4
4061
338.4
5.0
24-440-18.3
35-330-9.4
23-9
61-461
74-40.6
1
75-185
40.5%

BUCKEYES

26.6
40
21-17-2
13-19
239
128-101-10
2313
192.8
537
4.3
2289
190.8
306
170
55.6
13
7.5
13.5
4602
383.5
5.5
33-771-23.4
21-199-9.5
14-9
66-626
53-41.9
0
88-192
45.8%

1995 Citrus Bowl Rosters

Alabama Crimson Tide

No	Name, Pos.	Cl.	Hgt.	Wgt.	Exp.	Hometown
1	Marcell West, flk	So.	5-11	177	1L	Niceville, Fla.
2	Deshea Townsend, cb	Fr.	5-10	170	HS	Batesville, Miss.
3	Michael Proctor, pk	Jr.	5-11	183	2L	Pelham
5	Tony Johnson, te	Jr.	6-5	256	2L	Como, Miss.
7	Jay Barker, qb	Sr.	6-3	215	3L	Trussville
8	Tracy High, cb	So.	5-9	175	1L	Pontotoc, Miss.
10	Tommy Johnson, cb	Sr.	5-10	181	3L	Niceville, Fla.
11	Brad Ford, cb	Jr.	5-10	170	JC	Dadeville
12	Bryne Diehl, p	Sr.	6-3	215	2L	Oakman
13	Cedric Samuel, cb	So.	5-9	177	1L	Demopolis
14	Brian Burgdorf, qb	Jr.	6-3	197	2L	Cedartown, Ga.
15	William Watts, pk	So.	6-1	180	1L	Pleasant Grove
16	Josh Niblett, fb-te	Jr.	6-2	222	1L	Demopolis
18	John David Phillips, s	Fr.	6-4	195	HS	Anniston
19	Chad Key, se	Jr.	6-5	213	1L	Parrish
20	Sherman Williams, hb	Sr.	5-10	185	3L	Mobile
22	Willie Gaston, cb-s	Fr.	5-11	190	2L	Mobile
23	Andre Short, ss	Sr.	5-11	205	RS	LaGrange, Ga.
28	Brian Steger, hb	So.	6-3	220	1L	New Market
29	Dennis Riddle, hb	Fr.	6-0	195	HS	Tuscaloosa
30	Taurus Turner, fb	So.	6-1	200	1L	Fort Payne
31	Sam Shade, ss	Sr.	6-0	195	3L	Birmingham
32	Curtis Alexander, hb	Fr.	6-1	195	RS	Memphis
33	Kenneth Scissum, fb	Fr.	6-1	215	HS	Attalla
36	André Royal, slb	Sr.	6-2	228	2L	Northport
37	Rhondi Gibson, wr	Jr.	5-10	185	RS	Brewton
38	Patrick Hape, te	So.	6-4	249	1L	Killen
39	Eric Turner, ss	Jr.	6-1	200	2L	Fort Payne
40	Mickey Conn, cb	Sr.	5-10	175	2L	Snellville, Ga.
41	Ralph Staten, wlb	So.	6-3	200	1L	Semmes
42	Paul Pickett, slb	Fr.	6-2	215	RS	LaGrange, Ga.
44	Darrell Blackburn, de	So.	6-3	244	1L	Huntsville
45	Tarrant Lynch, fb	Sr.	6-0	215	3L	Town Creek
46	John Tanks, wlb	So.	6-4	226	1L	Butler
49	Jeff Foshee, fb	Sr.	5-9	207	3L	Millbrook
51	Laron White, rg	So.	6-2	282	1L	Courtland
52	Michael Rogers, mlb	Sr.	6-1	232	3L	Luverne
53	Darrell Smith, c	Jr.	6-2	265	Sq	Munford
54	Anthony Dowdell, de	So.	6-1	226	Sq	Columbus, Ga.
55	Fernando Davis, slb	So.	6-3	245	1L	Aberdeen, Miss.
57	Lamont Floyd, wlb	So.	6-2	250	1L	Orange Park, Fla.
60	Joey Harville, lt	Sr.	6-5	275	3L	Moulton
64	Maurice Belser, lg	Jr.	6-2	277	2L	Cordova
65	Jackson Cook, snap	So.	6-1	260	Sq	Cullman
68	Will Friend, rg	Fr.	6-2	270	RS	Philadelphia, Miss.
69	Jon Stevenson, c-rg	Sr.	6-3	285	3L	Memphis
71	John Causey, c	So.	6-2	262	1L	Hayneville
72	Pete DiMario, rt	So.	6-4	286	1L	Tuscaloosa
74	Kareem McNeal, rt	Jr.	6-5	270	2L	Tuskegee
75	Shannon Brown, dt	Jr.	6-5	266	2L	Millbrook
76	Elverett Brown, de	Sr.	6-4	284	3L	Montgomery
77	Joel Holliday, ot	Fr.	6-3	300	RS	Six Mile, S.C.
78	Ozell Powell, dt	So.	6-5	295	1L	Greenville
79	Jeremy Pennington, lg	So.	6-2	272	1L	Vernon
80	Toderick Malone, flk	Jr.	5-11	171	1L	Attalla
84	Roman Colburn, se	Sr.	6-0	180	2L	Fort Payne
85	Curtis Brown, se	Jr.	6-2	185	2L	Johns Island, S.C.
86	Rod Rutledge, te	Fr.	6-5	250	HS	Birmingham
87	Dwayne Rudd, wlb	Fr.	6-3	240	HS	Batesville, Miss.
88	Chester Lewis, snap	So.	6-4	236	Sq	Tuscaloosa
90	John Walters, mlb	Jr.	6-2	225	2L	Dallas
91	Dameian Jeffries, de	Sr.	6-5	275	3L	Sylacauga
92	Tyrell Buckner, mlb	So.	6-0	250	1L	Denison, Texas
94	Kendrick Burton, dt	Jr.	6-5	288	1L	Hartselle
95	Kelvin Moore, de	So.	6-3	265	1L	Daphne
96	Bryan Thornton, dt	Jr.	6-7	280	2L	Mobile
97	Vann Bodden, dt-de	Jr.	6-5	267	1L	Moss Point, Miss.
98	Matt Parker, dt	Jr.	6-4	275	JC	Lawton, Okla.
99	Eric Kerley, dt	Fr.	6-2	280	HS	Birmingham

Ohio State Buckeyes

No	Name, Pos.	Cl.	Hgt.	Wgt.	Exp.	Hometown
1	DeWayne Carter, flk	Jr	6-1	192	1L	Youngstown
2	Ty Howard, cb	So	5-9	174	1L	Columbus
3	Dimitrious Stanley, flk/rb	So	5-10	181	1L	Worthington
5	Dan Colson, fs	So	6-0	190	Sq	Middletown
7	Joey Galloway, se	Sr	5-11	186	2L	Bellaire
8	Stanley Jackson, qb	Fr	6-1	198	RS	Paterson, N.J.
9	Tito Paul, cb	Sr	6-1	196	3L	Kissimmee, Fla.
9	Josh Jackson, pk	So	5-11	162	Sq	Logan
10	Tom Hoying, qb	Fr	6-4	221	RS	St. Henry
12	Buster Tillman, se	So	6-1	185	1L	Steubenville
14	Bobby Hoying, qb	Jr	6-4	222	1L	St. Henry
16	Preston Harrison, olb	Sr	6-5	245	Sq	Columbus
17	Chris Sanders, flk	Sr	6-1	175	2L	Denver, Colo.
21	Tim Patillo, fs	Sr	5-10	178	2L	Aliquippa, Pa.
23	Scott Terna, p	Sr	5-11	196	1L	Kanehoe, Hi.
24	Shawn Springs, cb	Fr	5-11	181	RS	Silver Spring, Md.
26	Anthony Gwinn, ss	So	6-0	189	1L	Columbus
27	Eddie George, tb	Jr	6-3	230	2L	Philadelphia
30	Greg Bellisari, olb	So	6-1	230	1L	Boca Raton, Fla.
32	Obie Stillwell, olb	Jr	6-0	213	Sq	Mansfield
34	Rob Kelly, fs	So	6-2	200	1L	Newark
37	Nicky Sualua, fb	Fr	5-11	251	RS	Santa Ana, Cal.
38	Mike Malfatt, pk	Fr	6-3	210	RS	Dublin
39	Matt Calhoun, fb	So	6-0	237	1L	Heath
43	Ryan Miller, olb	So	6-2	217	1L	Allen Park, Mich.
46	Marlon Kerner, cb	Sr	5-11	188	3L	Columbus
47	Dennis Maag, fs	Jr	6-1	176	1L	Orrville
50	Eric Gohlstein, ol	Fr	6-4	330	HS	Cleveland
53	Scott Lynch, snapper	Sr	5-10	220	Sq	Parma Hgts.
54	Brian Stoughton, de	Jr	6-2	240	Sq	London
55	Will Connery, mlb	Jr	6-1	235	Sq	Vandalia
56	Randall Brown, dt	Sr	6-3	276	Sq	Detroit
57	LeShun Daniels, og	So	6-2	275	Sq	Warren
64	Mike Dully, ot	Sr	6-4	295	1L	Hamilton
65	Juan Porter, c	So	6-4	290	1L	Cleveland
70	Matt Bonhaus, dt	Sr	6-5	285	1L	Cincinnati
72	Jamie Sumner, og	Jr	6-4	290	Sq	Wichita, Kas.
74	Greg Kuszmaul, og	Jr	6-4	294	Sq	Warren
75	Orlando Pace, ol	Fr	6-6	320	HS	Sandusky
76	Pete Beckman, ng	Sr	6-4	255	1L	Chesterland
77	Eric Moss, og	So	6-5	320	Sq	Charleston, W.V.
78	Korey Stringer, ot	Jr	6-5	315	2L	Warren
79	Larry Waldon, ot	Fr	6-6	340	RS	Detroit
80	Rickey Dudley, te	Jr	6-7	240	Sq	Henderson, Tex.
83	Terry Glenn, flk	So	5-11	180	1L	Columbus
84	Craig Powell, olb	Jr	6-4	224	2L	Youngstown
89	D.J. Jones, te	Jr	6-4	260	2L	Lebanon
90	Lorenzo Styles, mlb	Jr	6-2	243	2L	Farrell, Pa.
92	Matt Finkes, de	So	6-2	258	1L	Piqua
94	Mike Vrabel, de	So	6-4	260	1L	Stow
97	John Day, de	Fr	6-3	245	RS	Independence
99	Luke Fickell, ng	So	6-4	260	1L	Westerville

Citrus Bowl Winds It Up For Some

by Kirk McNair

It has been another excellent group of Tide players who have won for four years

One of the few bad things about college football is saying goodbye to a senior class, and that's particularly true with the group finishing its Crimson Tide career in this year's Citrus Bowl. A few have been on board all five years of the Gene Stallings' reign, and all have been a part of extraordinary winning.

Not all football players are created equal. In Alabama's senior class are players who

have played in more Crimson Tide football games than anyone who has gone before and players who will leave with honors and records. And there are also men who will finish out their Bama careers who are known only to their coaches and teammates for the work they have done on the practice field. While the stars are best known away from the football team, all who toil for Alabama have played a part in the success.

This group, which has won 44 games in

the past four years (against only five losses and a tie) can become the first four-year group in Bama history to have 45 victories. (Bama players from 1977 through 80 had a 44-4 record.) And that's only one of a number of extraordinary milestones this class has been a part of.

Most outstanding achievement was the 1992 national championship, the 12th national title and 20th Southeastern Conference crown for the Tide. But this group of seniors was also part of the SEC record 28-game winning streak (and 31-game non-losing streak) compiled through 1991-1993 and they were in Baton Rouge this year when the Tide rolled to a 35-17 victory—the 700th win in Alabama history. And they reached the SEC Championship Game in each of the three years it has been played by winning the West Division. They will be making their fourth bowl trip this year, meeting Ohio State in the Citrus Bowl January 2.

In alphabetical order, this year's senior class of football players is:

Carl Albright, holder from Tuscaloosa;

Jay Barker, quarterback from Trussville;

Anthony Burroughs, fullback from Rogersville;

Roman Colburn, split end from Fort Payne;

Jason Cole, linebacker from Albertville;

Mickey Conn, cornerback from Snellville, Georgia;

Bryne Diehl, punter from Oakman;

Michael Favors, offensive guard from Mobile;

Jeff Foshee, fullback from Millbrook;

Willie Gaston, safety from Mobile;

Joey Harville, offensive tackle from Moulton;

Dameian Jeffries, defensive end from Sylacauga;

Tommy Johnson, cornerback from Niceville, Florida;

Kevin Komisar, center from Nashville;

Tarrant Lynch, fullback from Town Creek;



Offensive lineman Jon Stevenson and quarterback Jay Barker have been on the winning side in a lot of football games in their Alabama careers.

Barry Fikes Photo

Jeff McCullough, offensive tackle from Oneonta;

Brad Ranson, defensive tackle from Huntsville;

Shelby Robbins, linebacker from Mobile;

Michael Rogers, linebacker from Luverne;

André Royal, linebacker from Northport;

Sam Shade, strong safety from Birmingham;

Jon Stevenson, offensive guard from Memphis;

Matt Wethington, kicker from Titusville, Florida; and

Sherman Williams, halfback from Mobile.

The individual accomplishments of these seniors contributed greatly to the considerable team accomplishments. However, it is the nature of football that some have more honors and records than others.

At the head of the senior class is offensive captain and quarterback Jay Barker. Barker was winner of the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award, presented to the nation's top senior quarterback based on academics, leadership, character and ability. He is best known for Alabama's record in games he started at quarterback: 34-2-1. He is the Crimson Tide career record-holder (bowl game statistics do not count) in passing yards (5,699), completes (402), and attempts (706).

Halfback Sherman Williams finished his Bama career as the Tide's fifth all-time leading rusher with 2,486 yards. As a senior he rushed for 1,341 yards, second best in Bama history, as was his record of 12 games in which he rushed for 100 or more yards. He was the SEC's leader in all-purpose yardage this year with 1,628.

Both Barker and Williams were named All-SEC, as were their senior teammates Jon Stevenson, Dameian Jeffries, Tommy Johnson, Willie Gaston and Sam Shade. Barker and Williams were both two-time recipients of the SEC Offensive Player of the Week Award, while Jeffries was named SEC Defensive Player of the Week for his play against Auburn.

Offensive captain Tarrant Lynch is also in the Alabama record book as he has participated in 51 games. Lynch was in two games as a freshman in 1990 before being injured and redshirted, then played in all but one game the past four seasons. Two other seniors—defensive captains Tommy Johnson and Sam Shade—have played in every game since the start of the 1991 season, a total of 50 games each prior to the Citrus Bowl. Matt Hammond and Lemanski Hall, who finished

their Bama careers last year, were the only previous members of the 50-game club.

While Barker's record as a starter has been well-documented, Jon Stevenson (who has started since his freshman year and played tackle, guard and center) has an even better starting record: 38-2-1.

Tommy Johnson has blocked four kicks in his career, including three this year (but not including one in last year's Gator Bowl) to tie Leroy Cook as the all-time leading kick blocker in a career and tie him with four former Tiders for most in one season.

Sam Shade ranks third in tackles for a defensive back with 107, probably none more important than the one he made on Auburn All-America wide receiver on a fourth down play as Bama held on to defeat the Tigers 21-14 this year.

Barker, Williams and Jeffries all received All-America mention.

Although Bryne Diehl's punting average was down slightly in his senior season, his

effectiveness was up. Alabama led the SEC in net punting and Diehl put about half of his punts either inside the opponents' 20-yard line or into the end zone, a big boost for Bama in field position. Diehl also had good success in making plays from punt formation, making either a first down or a touchdown with a run or a pass on five of the six times he didn't punt the football.

Diehl is one of a dozen Tide seniors who came to Alabama without a scholarship. He earned one during his career, as did Mickey Conn, Roman Colburn and Jeff Foshee.

While the football players work very hard and get much recognition, there are two other essential groups of students actively involved in Bama's football success: the trainers and managers.

Senior trainers this year are Joey McLeod, Hunter Moore, Tommy Patterson and Shane Smith.

Senior managers are Jobey Marriner and Dana Proulx.

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Not A Star, But A Big Winner

by Donald F. Staffo

Long-time goal of playing for the Crimson Tide was a challenge successfully met

Although most are just beginning to think about recruiting, coaches have to think about it constantly. And Roman Colburn is proof that a coach can't begin too early. Colburn, a fifth-year senior wide receiver, was seven years old when he met former Alabama Head Football Coach Paul Bryant. Colburn said, "Coach Bryant signed a piece of paper for me and said, 'Hope you're coming to Bama.' I knew right then and there where I was going. Kids in the South at that time really looked up to him. So many people talked about Coach Bryant that I thought his name was written somewhere in the Bible."

Despite being a stellar all-around athlete in high school, Colburn was not a recruited football player. But that didn't bother him. "I wasn't recruited by any school whatsoever," Colburn said. "I was 5-10 and weighed only 140 pounds and I wasn't that fast, so nobody was looking my way. It didn't make any difference, because from second grade on I already knew I was going to Alabama."

"I could have gone to a smaller school where I would have played more," Colburn said. "But I don't want to be average. That's just the way I am. I'm the type person who goes for the home run ball. I try to go for the best that's out there, and I think The University of Alabama is the greatest university in the nation."

Although Colburn was not recruited, he was a fine prep performer at Fort Payne. In addition to excelling in football, he set three school records in track (100- and 200-meter dashes and as a member of the mile relay team) and finished fourth in the state in wrestling.

Not intimidated at all by the All-America and all-state and generally high-profile players annually signed by Alabama, Colburn walked on as a freshman in 1990. Colburn

admitted he had second thoughts in his second week of practice when defensive back George Teague hit him so hard Colburn's helmet was knocked off. "I thought to myself, 'Roman, why are you here?' But then I heard the band (which practices across Bryant Drive from the Thomas-Drew football practice fields) playing 'Yea, Alabama,' and that kept me going. That and a lot of people in my hometown who told me I couldn't do it. But I'm one of those people who when someone tells me I can't do something, I'll do whatever it takes to prove them wrong. Kind of like Rocky Balboa."

Colburn has not only stuck it out, but he has played and made contributions to the team. His biggest was this season in the LSU game when Tommy Johnson blocked a Tiger punt and Colburn scooped the ball up and raced 33 yards for a touchdown to extend the Tide lead to 14-3. Another came in the 1992 Ole Miss game when Colburn leveled a Rebel defender with a hit that was later designated by ESPN as the national "Block of the Day." His one pass reception this year, a 17-yarder, came in Bama's opening game of the season.

He played in the 1993 Sugar Bowl against Miami for the national championship and in the 1993 Gator Bowl against North Carolina. For the past three years he has also been a member of the Tide's special teams, seeing action in every game the past two seasons and in six contests as a sophomore. He will leave Alabama with three letters. Not bad for a kid nobody wanted.

"The touchdown and the 'Block of the Week' are my biggest thrills," Colburn said. "The touchdown was gratifying because my dad is from Louisiana. As for the block, I caught the guy from the blindside and flipped him. That block was really the first time I got any recognition of any kind at

Alabama."

Except for those brief moments in the limelight, Colburn has accepted and thoroughly enjoyed his role as an anonymous spot player. Lacking some of the physical skills possessed by most of his teammates, Colburn has compensated with the intangibles coaches look for in athletes.

"Roman may be limited in some things compared to some other players, but the biggest thing he gives you is effort," said Assistant Coach Woody McCorvey. "He's got a great attitude. He's always going to do what you ask him, and he's always going to try as hard as he can to do the things you want done. He's a team player who is always encouraging his teammates and is liked by all his teammates."

"Alabama has got a lot of talented players in front of me, and I know that," Colburn said. "I'm not interested in statistics or awards. I'm a team player. I feel, when we win, everybody wins."

Those are the words any coach would love to hear from a player. And it's no surprise that Roman is the son of a coach. Colburn's father, Billy, is assistant football and head wrestling coach at Fort Payne, the school that also produced former four-year starter Matt Hammond and current Tiders Eric and Taurus Turner.

The father has not only taught his son about football, but prepared him for life.

"My father is the best coach that I've ever had, both on and off the field," said Roman. "He's had the greatest influence on my life."

"He and my mother (Joy) have supported me all through the years and helped me out a lot. If not for them, I wouldn't be here."

Colburn, a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, credits his faith for helping him overcome adversity, and not just in sports. Disadvantages as a football player



Senior wide receiver Roman Colburn walked on at Alabama and earned a scholarship. He will leave with his degree, three letters and a national championship ring. He also has the satisfaction of knowing he did what many thought was impossible, living his dream of playing for the Crimson Tide.

Barry Fikes Photo

aside, Colburn said his biggest test was getting over the loss of his 17-year old sister, Jacey, who was tragically killed in an automobile accident December 20, 1992, two weeks before the Tide was to meet Miami in the Sugar Bowl.

"We were practicing for the Sugar Bowl when Coach (Gene) Stallings called me in my room and told me that my sister had been in an accident and that I had to go home," Colburn said.

"When I got home, my father told me she had fought hard, but that she was gone.

"That floored me. It was the hardest I've ever been hit. I've been through a lot of tough times, but that was the hardest thing that I ever had to go through."

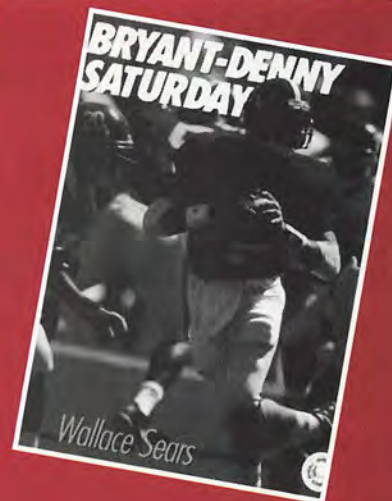
Colburn, now nearing the conclusion of his Crimson Tide football career, is symbolic of what college sports should be—young people playing for the sheer joy and challenge of athletic competition. He's intelligent, positive, up-beat, and most of all, very appreciative of the opportunity he's had to play—not

just for any school, but for Alabama.

Now 6-1 and 180-pounds ("And I'm a lot faster now that I was in high school."), Colburn is also a shining example of the saying that good things eventually happen to those who work hard and persevere. Prior to the season Colburn was officially rewarded for his efforts.

"In August at the end of two-a-days, Coach Stallings called me into his office and awarded me a scholarship," Colburn said. "When I came here I only wanted to be a part of the team and contribute. I never dreamed of getting a scholarship. I thought that was too far-fetched."

Clearly satisfied with how his Crimson Tide career has turned out, Colburn, a public relations major who wants to go into sports promotions, said, "I wasn't supposed to be here, but I accepted the challenge. I did it. It's like that saying, 'There's no traffic jam on that extra mile.' I'm leaving with a National Championship ring and three varsity letters."



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Vann Bodden:

He'll Have To Work His Way Back

by John Barnes

Injury came at bad time
for junior defensive end

As the Alabama football team tries to erase the pain of a one-point loss to the Florida Gators in the Southeastern Conference Championship game, junior defensive end Vann Bodden is feeling some pain of his own. Unable to participate in the Tide's final two contests of the year due to a knee injury suffered in practice the week before the Auburn game, a player who truly seemed to be coming into his own was reduced to the role of spectator.

Missing a huge win over Auburn and an equally huge loss to Florida, Bodden can only think of what might have been and take solace in his excellent play over the second half of the season.

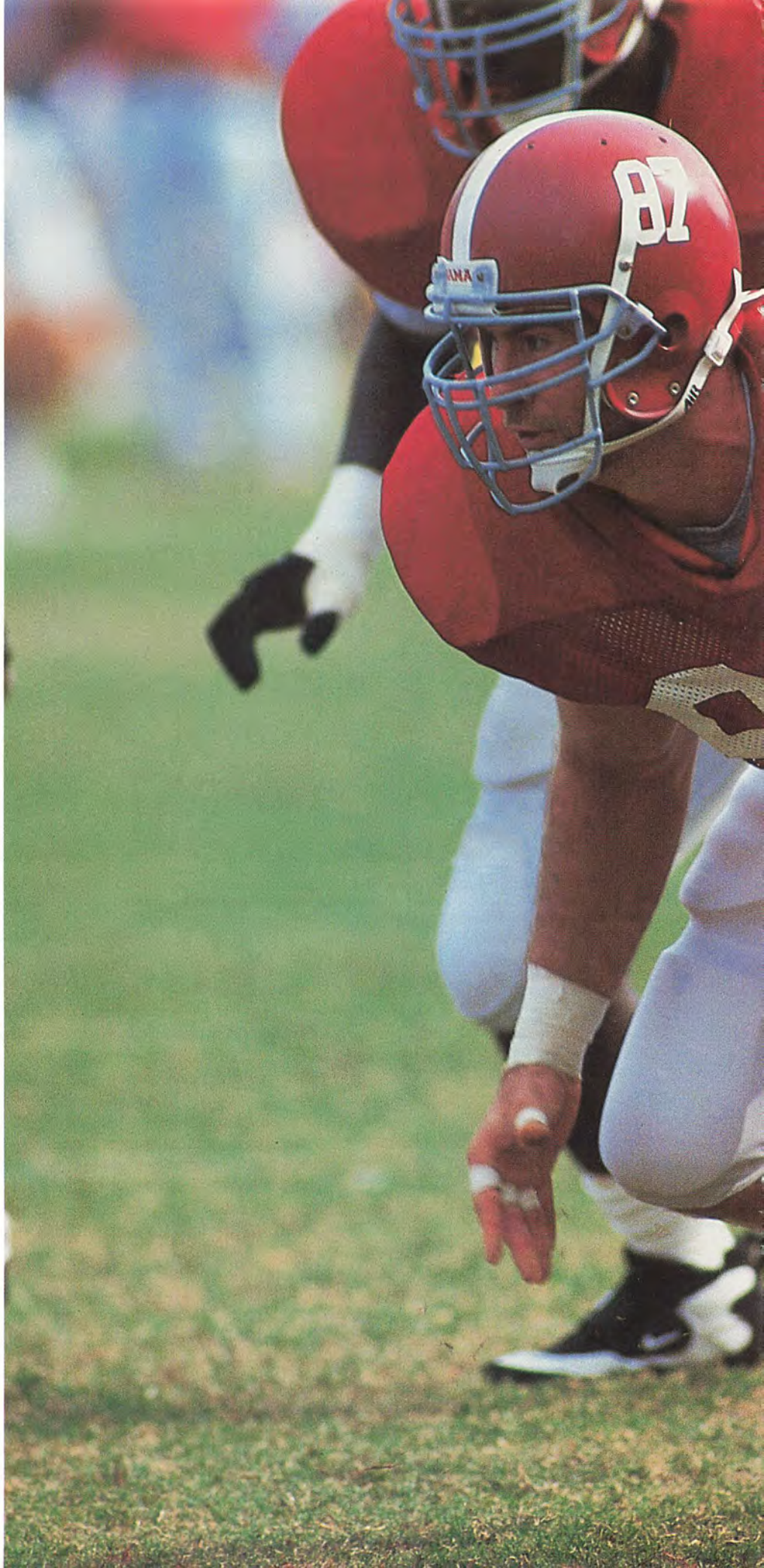
For the 6-5, 270-pound Moss Point, Mississippi, native, 1994 marked the best and the worst of times. "It's pretty tough to deal with," said Bodden. "The injury was just a freak thing. It happened against the scout team before Auburn. This type of injury, (strained medial collateral ligament) most people can go ahead and play with, but the trainers and coaches didn't think it would be a good idea."

Spearheading a defensive attack that triggered Bama's most impressive win of the year, a 35-17 win at LSU, Bodden finally showed the talent and intensity that Bama coaches knew he had all along.

Against the Bengal Tigers, Bodden was all over the field, recording six tackles, including three for losses, a sack and a caused fumble. Bodden seemed to be in the LSU backfield on almost every play. For his exploits, he was named the SEC Defensive Player of the Week.

Making Bodden's performance more remarkable is the fact that LSU marked his first

Just when it seemed Crimson Tide defensive end Vann Bodden was getting off the mark in his Crimson Tide career, his season was cut short by a knee injury. Barry Fikes Photo







Vann Bodden (97), a junior defensive end for Alabama, had his season short-changed a bit by a knee injury, but he has his sights set on another successful Bama campaign in 1995.

Barry Fikes Photo

career start. "That was a great game for me, no doubt," said Bodden. "I think the key for me was just trying to settle down and play ball. I knew I might not get a second chance in a starting situation, so I settled down and concentrated. Luckily, things worked out pretty well. We dominated the game and scored every way imaginable. I was proud to be a part of it."

The next week, Bodden recovered a big fumble against Mississippi State that led to the Tide's first points of the game, helping Bama to be in a position to stage a furious fourth quarter rally and win the game 29-25.

For Bodden, the injury could not have come at a worse time. One of seven different players to start along the defensive front in 1994, Bodden's nose for the ball and intense play proved to be a positive for a stop unit that, while

leading the SEC in scoring defense, struggled at times to find an identity.

Bodden feels that Bama's alignment change, from a 3-4 to a 4-3, hindered the development of the down linemen. "We made that change last year because it better suited our personnel and I still feel that it does," said Bodden. "But when you've been running the 3-4 for 20 years or so, it takes some time to adjust. I think losing Eric Curry and John Copeland in 1992 dictated the move more than anything else. This year, the only player we lose is Damiean (Jeffries), so I have to think we'll be a pretty dominating unit next year."

Alabama's 11-0 regular season record exceeded the expectations of almost everyone, including Bodden. "Our goal here every year is to go undefeated and have a chance to play for the national championship, so

in that respect, I'm not surprised," he said. "I have to admit, though, after our first three or four games, I knew that if we didn't drastically improve, we would eventually lose a game. It's kind of become our trademark to get a little bit better every game and that's exactly what we did. We're fortunate enough to have great coaches and great talent. We have a game plan every week designed to win. More times than not, we didn't execute the game plan like we were supposed to, but we won anyway. I think that's the mark of a good football team."

For most followers of college football, Alabama means defense. Ironically, it was the Tide offense, not the defense, that carried the team over the first half of the season. No one was more surprised than Bodden. "During spring practice last year, everyone, including my-

self, thought the defense would have to carry us," he said. "I don't mean that as a knock against the offense, but we had a young line and a new coach (Homer Smith). They (the offense) came along a lot quicker than any of us thought they would. They saved us on more than one occasion. With the exception of one or two games, the offense has carried the load right through the Mississippi State game. We always seemed to step forward in the fourth quarter and play hard, but I don't think we played a full 60 minutes of Alabama defense all year. We are very fortunate to have the record we do."

Bodden's rise into the starting lineup has been an uphill battle. There were times, early in his Alabama career, that he felt like quitting. "My first couple of years here were rough. I hated being redshirted. Even worse, I hated dressing for games know-

ing I wasn't going to play, barring an unforeseen rash of injuries," he said. "When I look back, though, I know it was for the best. I think it really helped my development and my maturity. I've talked to a lot of the guys who were not redshirted but wish they had been."

As a senior linebacker at Moss Point High School, Bodden was his team's defensive bell cow, recording an astounding 199 tackles his senior year, in addition to 10 sacks and five fumble recoveries. His high school teammates included Mississippi State's Derrick Taite and Florida's Jack Jackson. He was contacted by a number of top-notch programs, making visits to Miami, Florida, Florida State, Clemson and what he calls a "courtesy visit" to Mississippi State. Both his father and his uncle played at Southern Miss, so they also had to be considered.

In the end, it was Alabama's defensive style and tradition that finally won him over.

Arriving at The Capstone in August of 1991 a slim wide-eyed freshman, Bodden had no idea what was in store for him. "That first week of two-a-days really blew me away," he said. "I never knew it was possible to pack that much conditioning into that period of time. I had been sick over the summer, so I had lost some weight. After two-a-days, I lost even more weight, so a redshirt year was pretty much a formality."

Things did not improve in 1992. Although he was allowed to dress for games and make an occasional travel squad, Bodden, now an outside linebacker, saw little playing time aside from mop-up duty in the Tide's 37-0 blowout of Tulane. "That was really when I started to get frustrated," said Bodden. "At the time, I weighed 250 or so, and we were still running the 3-4, so our outside linebackers were really glorified defensive backs. There were

times when I was ready to pack up and head home, transfer or whatever. I think the problem was that I was too hard on myself. I let every little thing get to me and it effected my playing and my attitude. Some of the older guys talked me into sticking it out and I'm glad I did."

In 1993, Bodden was moved back to defensive end in Bama's new alignment. He settled into the position and logged some solid playing time, mostly on special teams. He did manage to crack the playing rotation in four games, recording two tackles on the year. Although his playing time increased, he battled inconsistency throughout the season, playing less over the second half of the year. "Last year taught me that you have to keep your head on straight," he said. "At times, I probably didn't take practice as seriously as I should have and it cost me. It took a while to figure it out, but by spring practice, I think I was pretty well with the program."

This season, Bodden finally lived up to expectations. It seems when Bodden started playing well, the Tide defense followed suit and picked it up a notch. Bodden points to the LSU game as the shining moment for himself and the defense. "That was a great game for me and for the whole defense. On a personal level, it was a big game. Baton Rouge is close to home and I was getting my first start. I knew if I didn't take advantage of it, I might not get another shot."

Bodden made the most of the opportunity and the defense as a whole seemed to take on a new personality that carried over into the rest of the season.

Early in the season it looked as if Bodden might not get a chance at all. An incident in the weight room, which Bodden now recalls with humor, could just have easily ended in tragedy. In a freak accident, an 80-pound dumbbell got loose and struck

Bodden squarely on the head. "I'm still not exactly sure what happened," said Bodden with a laugh. "I was doing a tri-cep exercise and for some reason, the weight bench just collapsed and the dumbbell landed right on my head. I remember everyone came running over to make sure I was all right. I was more mad than anything so I picked up the weight bench and threw it across the room."

Initially, Bodden felt no ill effects from the incident. That is, until the following day. "The next morning, I drove my car to the post office to mail some stuff, then drove back to the dorm, parked my car and went to class. During class, I started feeling really sick, so I left and went back to the dorm to eat. I decided I had better go see Coach Mac (Trainer Bill McDonald). I went to my car and noticed my keys were not in my pocket. I'm always real good about keeping up with

stuff, so I knew something was wrong. As it turned out, I had locked my keys inside with the engine running for a couple of hours. I knew then that something was wrong. They called it post-traumatic syndrome, or something like that, but it sure felt like a concussion to me."

Two CAT scans and four missed practices later, Bodden once again found himself behind. "That set me back quite a bit," he said. "I only missed four practices, but it took much longer to catch up with everyone else."

Had it not been for the unfortunate incident, we might have seen the real Vann Bodden much earlier in the season.

Whether or not Bodden will play in the Tide's January 2 matchup with the Ohio State Buckeyes remains to be seen. If not, he will be one of seven experienced defensive linemen to return in 1995. It should be a banner year.

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He Can Be Part Of Something Big

by John Barnes

Play of senior guard is critical to basketball team

With the leading players returning from last year, things are looking bright for Alabama basketball. Senior guard Artie Griffin is glad to be along for the ride. Many feel this could be the Tide's most productive offensive team in years. Bama returns seven of its top nine scorers from 1994. Gone, however, are de-

fensive stalwarts Shon Peck-Love and Walter Pitts.

Griffin believes Bama will more than pick up the slack on defense and that this team has a legitimate chance to reach the promised land—better known as the Final Four. With senior power forward Jason Caffey now back from an early-season foot injury, Griffin thinks the pieces are in place for the Tide to challenge Arkansas, Kentucky and Florida for the league championship.

"We really haven't shown a lot so far," said Griffin. "But this team is for real and we're only going to get better. Now that Jason is back, we need some time to get things together. I think we'll be great team by the time the conference schedule rolls around."

Knocked out of the pre-season NIT tournament in the second round by New Mexico State, Bama responded with a big road win against Virginia Commonwealth. "I was glad we had the opportunity to play in the NIT," said Griffin. "It gave us a chance to measure ourselves against some good early-season competition. We had a big win against Kansas State then had to immediately hit the road to New Mexico for that game. They played great defense against us, especially inside, and we just got beat. They took away any chance we had of establishing an inside game. If we had had Jason for that game, it might have been a different story."

Although the Tide's early-season schedule has been criticized by many in the national basketball media as too soft, Griffin believes games against Kansas State, New Mexico State, VCU, Tulane, as well as a trip to Oakland, California, for the Otis Spunkmeyer Classic, featuring Bama, TCU, California-Berkeley and Columbia, is plenty tough.

Looming on the horizon is the always-tough Southeastern Conference schedule. Bama opens with a bang, traveling to Nashville to face Vanderbilt on January 4. "The SEC is probably better than it has been in years," said Griffin. "Everyone is better. It's going to be a tough road."

For Artie Mack Larry Tevora Griffin, the

Artie Griffin thought that he knew something about the importance of defense when he finished his junior college career, but at Alabama he has learned the real importance of playing at a high level on both ends of the court. If he can perform at that high level, Bama could be among the nation's finest basketball teams.

Barry Fikes Photo



road to Tuscaloosa has been a long one. Hailing from San Antonio, Texas, Griffin was one of the hottest players in the state at Robert E. Lee High School. Averaging 30 points per game as a prep senior, Griffin claims to have been recruited "by everyone."

Although recruited "by everyone," his grades prevented him from playing Division I basketball for anyone. He enrolled at South Plains Junior College in Texas. As a second-year player at South Plains, Griffin led his team with 19.4 points and 4.1 assists per game. He helped South Plains to its first-ever junior college national tournament, finishing fifth in the nation.

"I think junior college was the best route for me at the time," said Griffin. "In high school, I was very offensive-minded like everyone else. In JC, I learned how important it is to play defense. When I got here, I realized how important it really was."

An acquaintance with former Bama Assistant Coach James Green, an assistant at Texas A&M when Griffin was in high school, led to an interest in Alabama after completing his eligibility at South Plains. Head Coach David Hobbs was impressed with Griffin and offered him a scholarship.

Joining the Tide for the 1993-94 season, Griffin stepped in at the shooting guard position a dished out a team-high 90 assists, while helping his team to a 20-10 record and a berth in the NCAA tournament.

"I had a great time last year," said Griffin. "We started out 3-5 and it looked like it was going to be a long season."

One game, however, seemed to turn around the season and turn the heads of the whole country. In only its second conference game of the year, Alabama pulled off a shocking 66-64 upset of eventual national champion Arkansas.

Bama entered the game with a 4-5 record, having lost to the likes of Tennessee-Chattanooga, College of Charleston and Southern Miss. The Tide had lost by 16 in its SEC opener to a rebuilding South Carolina team only three days before. Frustration was beginning to show. With criticism being thrown around the post-game locker room toward teammates and coaches, Alabama was looking very much like a team on the verge of coming apart at the seams.

Enter Arkansas. The Hogs were ranked

number one in the nation, virtually annihilating every opponent along the way. From the outset, the Tide played tenacious defense and solid, ball-control offense. Griffin played perhaps his best game of the season, emerging as the team's top scorer with 14 points. He also snagged two rebounds, dished out two assists and recorded four steals, the biggest on the final play of the game that sealed the Tide victory.

"There's no doubt that game is what turned it around for us," said Griffin. "We were prepared mentally and that's what it takes to beat a team like Arkansas. We played great defense and that was the key. Those guys are an offensive machine; we knew if we could shut them down, we'd have a chance against anybody. When you can stop guys like Corliss Williamson and Scotty Thurman, you've done your job."

From then, Alabama was a totally different team, winning 17 of 22 en route to its 13th appearance in the NCAA Tournament.

Griffin was a great addition for the Tide. Starting the final 27 games of the year, mostly at shooting guard, occasionally at point. He led the team in assists with 90 and tied for the team lead in steals with 34. He was

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named the Jefferson-Pilot Player of the Game in Bama's 69-61 victory over eventual Final Four participant Florida.

If there was one rap against Griffin last season, it was inconsistency. Brilliant at times, Griffin occasionally suffered mental lapses at some inopportune moments. "There's no doubt I could have played better at times," he said. "But you have to remember, I was a first-year player and was still learning the system. I made some mistakes, but I learned from them and I'll be a better player for it this year."

David Hobbs is looking for big things from Griffin, especially in the form of defense and overall consistency. "Artie had some very nice moments for us last year," said Hobbs. "He had some big games, but we need Artie to improve on his consistency. We need him to be consistent over a period of time, which I really feel like he will. Artie can shoot the ball, he's got good quickness, he's worked to improve his strength, he's gotten bigger. The thing we will have the biggest problem replacing is the defensive play of Walter Pitts

and Shon Peck-Love. We've got to replace that somehow. Artie Griffin needs to be a candidate to do that for us."

Griffin has great expectations for the Tide. He said, "I look at this team and all I see is talent everywhere. Jamal and Antonio are all-world. Jason is big and physical and is a great rebounder. Marvin is great at running the offense and shoots the three real well. Then you've got guys coming off the bench like Eric Washington and Roy Rogers. They're as important as anybody. We've got depth, we've got talent and we've got coaching. This can be a great team."

With five regulars returning, expectations have been running high for this season since Bama was eliminated from the NCAA tournament last year by an outstanding Glenn Robinson-led Purdue team.

Along with the high expectations, a little realism naturally follows. The SEC is one of the strongest conferences in America. After several sub-par years, the SEC is back in a

big way. Defending national champion Arkansas returns all five starters. Mississippi State features perhaps the league's best player in Eric Dampier. LSU is always tough. In the East, Kentucky and Florida will again be among the nation's elite.

Can the Tide challenge the Razorbacks for the West Division title? Can Bama do what no Tide team has ever done and win in Fayetteville? Griffin believes Bama has what it takes to win the West. "They say good competition makes you better," said Griffin. "If that's true, we'll be plenty good. We need to get our chemistry together; that's real important, especially on defense. If we keep our heads together and practice hard, we'll have a shot at the Final Four. Yeah, I think we can win in Fayetteville. No Alabama team has ever done that. We've come close, though."

If Griffin can do what Hobbs expects him to do—pick up his defense and play with more consistency—he could be a big part of one of the finest Alabama basketball teams in recent memory.



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Southeast Has Top Skill Players

by Craig Threlkeld

A look at the top prep skill position players in the Southeast

The South annually produces outstanding talent in the skill positions, and this season is no exception. While the quarterback choices may be few in number, tremendous talent abounds in the running back and defensive back positions.

With several teams losing many seniors in these areas, such as Alabama, no doubt these prospects will receive heavy recruitment from all of the major powers, not only those in the Southeastern Conference.

The following players featured are not necessarily the players being recruited by The University of Alabama. This is a collection of the best-known and most successful high school players as determined through newspaper reports and recruiting publications. No doubt Alabama will attempt to recruit some of these mentioned, but quite possibly Alabama scouts know of quality players not recognized by the aforementioned publications. These players are listed alphabetically by states.

FLORIDA

Kevin Coleman is a 5-10, 190-pound wide receiver from Niceville. Clocking at 4.5 in the 40-yard dash, Coleman is a good athlete who can run, catch and is a good downfield blocker. An all-state third team selection last year, Coleman holds his high school's record with 13 touchdown receptions, set as a junior. This year he had 37 catches for 832 yards and eight touchdowns going into the sectional playoffs. He's also a top kick returner.

Marcos Bullock is a 6-1, 180-pound burner from Pensacola. A product of Catholic High School, Bullock has been clocked at 4.3 and 10.3 in the 100 meters as a track athlete. An All-Northwest Florida and all-state selection, he came into his own as he rushed for 1,370 yards and 19 touchdowns as a junior. Bullock also is a good receiver out of the backfield and averaged 40 yards per kickoff return.

Michael Dean is a 6-3, 170-pound wide receiver from Key West. Described as a fearless receiver, he loves to catch balls across the middle and in traffic. As a junior Dean caught 31 passes for 850 yards and six touchdowns. Dean has been clocked at 4.6

in the 40 and rated as the number one wide receiver prospect and the number two player at the Florida camp.

Dan Evans is considered one of the top cornerbacks in the state of Florida. At 5-11 and 185 pounds, Evans has been clocked at 4.4 in the 40 and excels in man coverage. As a junior Evans earned all-county second team honors with 70 tackles, four interceptions, 15 pass breakups, three caused fumbles and one fumble recovery. Out of Lauderdale Lakes Boyd Anderson High School, Evans is coached by former Miami defensive back Selwyn Brown.

Martavious Houston is another of the state's top defensive back prospects. A big strong safety, Houston is a teammate of Evans. At 6-2 and 210 pounds, Houston is a big-time hitter with good speed (4.5) who plays the pass well, is very physical and has good closing speed. Houston's honors abound, including the All-Broward and all-

state first teams, *Super South* 75, and he was chosen the number one player in the state. He recorded 114 tackles, five sacks, three interceptions, seven caused fumbles and five fumble recoveries as a junior. Houston also stars in track and basketball.

Dexter Jackson is one of the few quarterback prospects coming out of this class. Out of Shanks High School in Quincy, Jackson accounted for 2,200 yards and 23 touchdowns as a junior. At 6-1 and 180 pounds, he is clocked at 4.5 in the 40, runs a 14.2 in the 120 meter hurdles and is considered one of the top running and passing quarterbacks in the state. He earned All-Big Bend, county Offensive Player of the Year and all-state honors in '93.

James Jackson is a 5-10, 204 pound running back from Glades Central High School in Belle Glade. As a backup to Florida freshman star Fred Taylor last season, Jackson managed 825 yards and seven touchdowns on 61 car-

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ries. Clocked as fast as 4.2, Jackson is considered by many to be as good as Taylor.

Torin Kirtsey is a 6-1, 180-pound defensive back from Jacksonville. An all-state selection who is considered to be the number two player in Jacksonville, Kirtsey is a good enough athlete to play running back, wide receiver or defensive back. As a junior he rushed for more than 1,800 yards and 29 touchdowns, along with recording 85 tackles, five interceptions, three punt return and four kickoff return touchdowns. He has been clocked at 4.5 and has camped at South Carolina and Notre Dame.

Larry Larkins of Fort Walton Beach Choctawhatchee is a 5-11, 170-pound wide receiver with 4.5 speed. He caught 22 passes for more than 400 yards on the heels of a solid junior campaign in which he had 29 catches for 772 yards.

Errick Love is an all-everything wide receiver out of Lake Worth. At 6-1 and 180 pounds, Love is a threat deep with 4.5 speed but has good hands for possession receiving. As a junior he caught 41 passes for 729 yards and eight touchdowns, earning him all-area, all-district, all-conference and second team all-state honors. As a senior he had 26 catches for 375 yards and a touchdown after a junior year when he had 41 catches for 729 yards and eight touchdowns. He's also a strong safety who had 52 tackles and two interceptions this year.

Billy Luckie is another of the few quality quarterback prospects this season, and he has committed to Alabama. Out of Choctawhatchee High School in Fort Walton Beach, Luckie completed 112 of 190 passes for 1,740 yards and 14 touchdowns. He finished fourth in the state last season with more than 1,800 yards passing. Luckie earned second team all-district, all-state honorable mention and was a *Super South* 75 selection in '93. He was rated the number 13 quarterback in the nation by *SuperPrep* and made Tom Lemming's pre-season All-America team. At 6-3 and 205 pounds, Luckie runs a 4.8 in the 40. Luckie picked Bama over FSU, Florida, Auburn and Georgia.

Jeremi Rudolph is one of the top players in the state. A 5-1, 180-pound running back from Apopka, Rudolph rushed for more than 1,600 yards and 30 touchdowns last season, and had more than 4,400 career yards and 76 touchdowns entering 1994. Coach Chip Gierke calls him "the best player in the school and the best in the state, hands down," which is high praise from a school that produced former Dolphins running back Sammy Smith. A "Warrick Dunn clone," Rudolph can play hurt and possesses superb instincts and moves. A *SuperSouth* 75 pick, he also earned all-county, all-conference, all-region and all-state merit as a junior.



Billy Luckie

Rudolph has 4.4 speed, but will have to work to improve his grades in order to qualify.

Peter Warrick is considered among the top five players in Florida. At 6-1 and 175 pounds, the wide receiver from Southeast High School in Bradenton recorded 34 receptions for 580 yards, along with 19 punt returns for 406 yards and a total of 12 touchdowns in '93. Clocked at 4.4, Warrick is versatile, exciting and can't be covered one-on-one. Warrick played on the 1993 state championship team, earning all-state and *SuperSouth* 75 honors.

GEORGIA

Karsten Bailey is a 6-1, 190-pound receiver from East Coweta High School in Sharpsburg. Bailey is an all-region player who most coaches consider to be the top skill player in middle Georgia. Clocked at 4.5 in the 40, as a junior Bailey rushed 59 times for 375 yards, caught 27 passes for 538 yards and scored 10 touchdowns. Bailey is also a strong player, benching 305 pounds and squatting 430 pounds.

Shamari Buchanan is a 6-1, 203-pound wide receiver at Douglas High School in Atlanta. He missed the first four games of the season after suffering a broken ankle, but his coach, Michael Sims, said he is being recruited by a number of Southeastern Conference schools and by Purdue in the Big Ten. He runs a 4.5 40 and averaged almost 27 yards per catch this year.

Jonathan Butler is a talented running back from Bainbridge. At 5-11 and 200 pounds, Butler possesses great athletic ability and power that allow him good success running between the tackles. Butler also displays good vision, speed at 4.6, good feet and balance that put him in the end zone 19 times with more than 1,600 yards last season. He

is considered the top running back in the state and is also a member of the all-state and *SuperSouth* 75 teams.

Marlon Byrd is a 5-11, 215-pound running back from Sprayberry High School in Marietta. Although clocked at 4.7, durability is one of Byrd's attributes. He once rushed for 301 yards on 51 carries and a touchdown in one game. Byrd finished 1994 with almost 1,500 yards and eight touchdowns, and he has good versatility with good hands out of the backfield. Fully qualified academically, Byrd was all-county and honorable mention all-state as a junior.

Earl Chambers is a 6-1, 185-pound quarterback at Banneker High School in College Park, but he is considered a college prospect as either a wide receiver or defensive back. He totaled over 1,400 yards and eight touchdowns as a junior. He is fully qualified academically.

Johnny Cooksey is a 5-10, 185-pound running back from Central High School in Thomasville. Playing for Coach Ed Pilcher, Cooksey's style has been likened to that of Emmitt Smith and Amp Lee. Cooksey rushed for more than 1,700 yards and 22 touchdowns as a junior, as his team won the state championship. Clocked at 4.6 in the 40, Cooksey also benches 340 pounds and boasts all-region and 3A all-state honors.

Benji McConkey is the second of only two Georgia quarterback prospects. From Dalton, McConkey is a drop-back passer with good mobility and 4.6 speed. Good-sized at 6-3 and 185 pounds, he passed for 1,150 yards and 10 touchdowns as a junior, following a 12 touchdown, 1,742-yards sophomore season. McConkey was the *Chattanooga Free Press* and *Dalton Citizen* Player of the Year and was chosen to the All-Tri State and honorable mention all-state 3A teams last year.

Ryan Taylor is a 6-2, 216-pound defensive back who is considered the top free safety in the state. A four-year starter at Dublin High School, Taylor compiled 133 tackles and nine interceptions as a junior. Many feel Taylor may also be the best free safety in the South, boasting *SuperSouth* 75, All-Middle Georgia and all-state honors. Taylor's reputation is as an aggressive player who plays under control and does not make mistakes. Clocked at 4.6 in the 40, he benches 275 and maintains a 4.0 grade point average.

Fred White is a 5-11, 180-pound defensive back from Griffin. Characterized as a true corner, White is a tremendous athlete who played quarterback as a junior, scoring eight touchdowns. Many consider White the top cornerback in the state. Clocked at 4.4, White also ran on the state championship 400-meter relay team as a freshman and sophomore. Academically he'll have to improve in order to qualify.

KENTUCKY

Shaun Alexander is a 6-2, 195-pound running back from Boone County High School in Florence where he is unquestionably the top player in the state. In '93 Alexander rushed for more than 2,400 yards and 42 touchdowns on 265 carries. This followed a sophomore season where he accounted for 13 touchdowns and almost 1,100 yards. Clocking at 4.5, Alexander is a big back with tremendous acceleration, powerful open-field running ability and great vision. His honors include Louisville *Courier Journal* and Associated Press all-state, 4A Player of the Year, winner of the Marty Keyo Award as MVP of Northern Kentucky and selection to the *SuperSouth* 75 team.

Chris Redman could be one of the top quarterback prospects in the South. A 6-3, 195-pound drop-back passer from Male High School in Louisville, he threw for 2,000 yards and 25 touchdowns as a junior, following a 1,900 yards and 17 touchdown sophomore campaign. Redman can read defenses well and makes the hard throws look easy with a strong and accurate arm. Louisville has seen him three times at camp.

LOUISIANA

Kevin Dukes is a 5-10, 190-pound running back from John Curtis High School in

River Ridge. Strength is Dukes' mainstay, benching 285 pounds and squatting 405, along with winning the 1992-1993 state weight-lifting championship. As a junior he ran for 2,000 yards alongside now-Michigan back Chris Howard. Dukes runs a 4.5 in the 40 and was an all-district selection in '93.

Kevin Faulk is "mister everything" in the state of Louisiana. Faulk has been all-state and all-district twice, along with being selected as *SuperSouth* 75, All-Academia MVP, 5A Offensive MVP and District MVP. Faulk, who is not related to former Louisiana prep star Marshall Faulk, is considered the best player from the state in a long time. His career numbers entering 1994 include more than 3,100 rushing yards and 44 touchdowns on 340 carries. As a freshman he played cornerback, intercepting seven of his 12 career picks. Clocking at 4.4, his style is said to emulate the power and vision of Emmitt Smith, the speed of Marshall Faulk and the moves and agility of Barry Sanders. He has camped at LSU and McNeese State, but all of the major powers are after him. Unfortunately, he has never mentioned being interested in Alabama.

Rondale Mealey is a 6-0, 183-pound running back out of Destrehan. Clocking at 4.5 in the 40, Mealey is a gifted athlete. As a ju-

nior he ran for more than 2,300 yards and 35 touchdowns. He is also a member of the track team, running the 4X100 and 4X200 relays. Mealey's speed, body control, elusiveness and vision make him also a very gifted runner. Mealey accumulated all-metro, All-River Parish, all-state and all-district MVP honors as a junior.

Bo Meeks is one of the few quality quarterback prospects out of Louisiana. At 6-2 and 180 pounds, Meeks is a drop-back passer who threw for almost 1,600 yards and 10 touchdowns in '93. Leadership and pocket awareness are his strong suits, but he needs to hit the weight room. Meeks is an outstanding student along with being a second team all-district selection. He runs the 40 in 4.8.

Jamie Spencer is the South's top fullback prospect. A 6-2, 245-pound hard charging runner from Ouachita High School in Monroe, Spencer has been said to have the strength and toughness of Earl Campbell and the speed (4.5) of Jerome Bettis. In 1993 Spencer bulled his way to more than 1,800 yards and 21 touchdowns, earning District Offensive MVP, all-district, All-Northeast Louisiana and all-state honors.

MISSISSIPPI

Jason Clingan is a talented athlete at wide

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receiver from Pontotoc. At 6-2 and 173 pounds, Clingan is clocked at 4.5 in the 40 and was the state high hurdles champ in '93. As a receiver he is an athlete who makes great adjustments to the ball and makes good use of his speed. Also playing defensive back, he picked off five passes from his cornerback position. Clingan was an all-division and all-district selection as a junior.

Brian Darden is considered to be the number one prospect in the South by many. All-state and everything else, Darden rushed for almost 1,800 yards and 29 touchdowns as a junior, despite missing two games. As a sophomore he did not start until the fifth game of the season, but still managed to run for 1,000 yards and 20 touchdowns. Clocking at a blazing 4.3, Darden is likened to a young Tony Dorsett. At Warren Central High in Vicksburg he is also the defending 5A 100-meter champ with a time of 10.6.

Antwan Edwards is listed as a 6-1, 195-pound defensive back from Starkville. However, Edwards plays both quarterback and defensive back for Coach Chuck Friend (the father of Tide offensive lineman Will Friend). In addition, his versatility allowed him to play at wide receiver in '93, coupling four touchdowns with five interceptions. His versatility and 4.5 speed have major

powers salivating, and he has camped at Mississippi State.

Mario Edwards could be the top cornerback in the South. At 6-2 and 175 pounds with 4.4 speed, Coach Bill Matthews likens him to former standout Terrell Buckley. Edwards is a physical corner with the total package: speed, size and desire. In '93 Edwards recorded 48 tackles along with eight interceptions and has camped at FSU. Honors in '93 include all-coast, all-district, *SuperSouth* 75 and team secondary MVP.

Chad Grayson is a 6-0, 210-pound quarterback from Magee. Characterized as an over-achiever, Grayson has led Magee to the state championship the past two seasons. In 1993 he passed for more than 1,900 yards, 26 touchdowns and only six interceptions. Grayson has a strong, accurate arm and has complete control of the offense. Hailing from the school that produced John and Kris Mangum, Grayson's record (22-2) reflects losses in only the championship games.

Thomas Hill is a second team all-state performer from Meridian, where he is a 5-9, 170-pound cornerback who runs a 4.5 40. He starred for legendary Mississippi prep Coach Mac Barnes.

Reginald Hunter is a 6-1, 175-pound dynamic back from Moss Point. As a junior

Hunter rushed for more than 1,600 yards and 17 touchdowns on 184 attempts. Clocking at 4.4, Hunter also possesses an uncanny ability to change directions. A member of one of the state's top programs, Hunter is a *SuperSouth* 75 selection and a member of the All-Coast team.

Jarious Jackson is a 6-2, 220-pound quarterback from Tupelo. While many feel his passing skills and sub-par passing percentage will change his position in college, he still accounted for 1,700 yards and 20 touchdowns in '93. There are others who feel he will become too big to stay at quarterback, and like his strength and physical play at linebacker. Nevertheless, Jackson was all-district, Lee County Player of the Year and team MVP as a junior.

Marcus Taylor is a 6-3, 210-pound quarterback at Clarksdale where an impressive senior season has thrust him into the recruiting spotlight. He is academically eligible and was named to the *Jackson Clarion-Ledger* all-state team despite little pre-season publicity.

Michael Vaughn is a 6-1, 185-pound receiver who can be as good as he wants to be. A super athlete who also plays defensive back for Clarksdale, he accounted for 760 yards and eight touchdowns on offense along with 11 interceptions over the past two seasons. Vaughn's 4.5 speed, size, leaping ability and great hands make him the top wide receiver in the state, along with all-district and all-division selections.

TENNESSEE

Chris Avans is a 6-2, 190-pound quality quarterback from Farragut High School in Knoxville. Avans is athletic and can accumulate yards passing and rushing, accounting for almost 2,000 total yards and 30 touchdowns as a junior. Avans is an intense competitor, leading eight fourth-quarter rallies in 18 starts. Clocking at 4.7, Avans is big and strong and was honorable mention all-state and Region Offensive Player of the Year in '93.

Gary Barnes is a 5-11, 185-pound defensive back with 4.4 speed from White's Creek. A two-way performer, Barnes' athletic ability accounted for 842 yards and 11 touchdowns rushing, along with 70 tackles, two interceptions and four fumble recoveries from his cornerback position. Barnes is known as an aggressive player and was an all-region and second team all-district selection.

Fernando Bryant is a 5-11, 175-pound defensive back from Riverdale High School in Murfreesboro. An all-county and all-region selection, Bryant as a junior played cornerback and wide receiver. From cornerback he made 62 tackles and five interceptions, while catching 25 passes for 350 yards and one touchdown. He is superb at coverage and displays good hands with 4.4 speed and body control at both positions.

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Continuously updated beginning October 1, 1994.

Jermaine Copeland could be a larger version of David Palmer. A versatile athlete at 6-3 and 200 pounds, Copeland has earned all-county, all-region, All-East Tennessee and all-state honorable mention while playing six different positions. Projected to play defensive back in college, Copeland accounted for 2,200 all-purpose yards and 21 touchdowns, averaged seven tackles per game and intercepted five passes as a junior. Clocked at 4.6, Copeland plays for Harriman High School and has already committed to Tennessee.

Terry Copeland is a 5-10, 180-pound running back from Science Hill High School in Johnson City. Returning with all-state and Big East Conference Player of the Year honors, Copeland is a good off-tackle runner with good vision. As a junior he rushed for more than 1,900 yards and 22 touchdowns and has been clocked at 4.6. Copeland is considered the best player from Johnson City since Steve Spurrier.

Corey Ewing is a 5-11, 200-pound fullback from Central High School in Shelbyville. An all-mid state selection at running back, Ewing also earned all-state honors at linebacker. As a fullback he rushed for more than 1,400 yards and 19 touchdowns, while recording 110 tackles and two interceptions.

Strength is a plus for Ewing, whose work ethic is tremendous.

Jason Harris is a player who could play a variety of positions in college. Listed as a 6-3, 170-pound quarterback, Harris led his district in passing with 996 yards and four touchdowns. An all-region selection, Harris can play quarterback, wide receiver or free safety with his 4.6 speed. Jason's brother is Terris Harris, who plays for the Miami Hurricanes.

Dante Hickey is a 6-1, 175-pound wide receiver from Cleveland. A member of the 4A state championship team last season, Hickey earned all-state honors. Hickey is another who can play several positions. As a running back he rushed 12 times for 288 yards and one touchdown, while as a receiver he corralled 11 passes for 235 yards and four touchdowns. As a free safety Hickey was second on the team in tackles with 67 and intercepted two passes. A seven-foot high jumper, Hickey has the ability to leave his feet to make a catch and has no regard for his body.

Mikal Smith is a 5-11, 170-pound defensive back from Bearden High School in Knoxville. Described as an all-around athlete, Smith played both ways for Coach Bill Young. As a running back Smith rushed for almost

1,200 yards and 18 touchdowns, caught 10 passes for 172 yards and two touchdowns and averaged 23 yards per kickoff return. Defensively Smith tallied 80 tackles (seven for losses) and recovered two fumbles. Smith's 4.4 speed enables him to make big plays. Son of Tennessee Secondary Coach Lovie Smith, Mikal has camped at Tennessee, Kentucky and Arizona State.

Robert Tolbert is the top wide receiver in Tennessee. At 6-3 and 187 pounds, Tolbert has 4.5 speed along with great size and hands. Out of Whitehaven High School in Memphis, Tolbert caught 24 passes for 456 yards and three touchdowns as a junior. As a senior he set a national record with seven touchdown receptions in one game. He has the ability to read defenses and get open. An all-district selection, Tolbert has camped at Illinois.

Al Wilson is a 6-2, 215-pound athlete who is being recruited as a strong safety. A tremendous high school quarterback, Wilson has 4.4 speed and has accounted for 2,800 yards and 32 touchdowns in the past two seasons. A two-time all-district and all-region selection, he is the defending shot put state champion, a SuperSouth 75 selection and the number four prospect in the state.

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BAMA SCORECARD

Commitments

Although signing day for high school senior football prospects is not until February 1, much of the groundwork has already been done. While January is the month of most commitments (which, of course, are not binding), Alabama has already received commitments from two top high school players.

Billy Luckie, a quarterback at Fort Walton Beach (Florida) Choctawhatchee, and Jason McDonald, an offensive lineman at Theodore, have both announced they will sign with Alabama.

Signing

By the time you read this, Alabama should also have its first football signee of the year. Junior college players who are going to graduate in December can sign scholarships between December 21 and January 15. Kevin Jackson, a 6-2, 200-pound defensive back at Jones Community College in Ellisville, Mississippi, told 'BAMA he would sign with the Crimson Tide on December 21. He was on an official visit to Alabama the weekend of December 17. Jackson was a star at Northview High School in Dothan two years ago. He earned junior college All-America honors this year.

Coaching Changes

It's that most wonderful time of the year when rumors fly about Alabama football coaching changes. Up until a few weeks ago, when Head Coach Gene Stallings finally got around to signing the contract extension he agreed to last January, the rumors included Stallings. Now he's got a contract to coach through the 1998 season.

Alabama has perhaps the nation's strongest coaching staff, so it's no surprise that many of

them are rumored for job openings. And this year there have been a large number of such openings.

Historically, schools in search of a coach look to winning programs for them, and Alabama has been raided frequently for the past 30 or so years. Indeed, in past years among the assistant coaches who have left Alabama are Bill Oliver, Mike Dubose, Jeff Rouzie, Homer Smith and Gene Stallings. And Alabama kept winning.

Bama may or may not lose an assistant coach (or several assistant coaches) this year. And if that happens, the man who put this staff together will replace them.

Football Honors

It's not surprising that Alabama's football team, one of the nation's best this year, had a number of individuals earning awards. Tide Head Coach Gene Stallings was named Southeastern Conference coach of the year in several polls, but the big winner was quarterback Jay Barker. In addition to winning the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award as the top senior quarterback (based on both athletic accomplishments and off-the-field qualities), he was a finalist for the Davey O'Brien Outstanding College Quarterback and finished fifth in Heisman Trophy balloting for the nation's best football player. Barker was second team All-America, SEC Player of the Year and All-SEC quarterback and Academic All-SEC.

Junior placekicker Michael Proctor earned a first team All-America award, while Sherman

Williams and Dameian Jeffries were second team All-America and cornerback Tommy Johnson was honorable mention All-America.

Tiders making first team All-SEC are Barker, safety Willie Gaston, Jeffries, Johnson, Proctor, offensive lineman Jon Stevenson, and Williams. Second team All-SEC players are defensive tackle Shannon Brown, strong safety Sam Shade and linebacker Ralph Staten.

Former prep teammates at South Panola High School in Batesville, Mississippi, cornerback Deshea Townsend and linebacker Dwayne Rudd, were first team SEC All-Freshman team.

Academic All-SEC honorees are Barker, Brown, quarterback Brian Burgdorf, split end Chad Key, tight end Josh Niblett, and placekicker Matt Wethington.

Among those receiving various honors as players of the week were Barker, defensive end Vann Bodden, Brown, Burgdorf, Jeffries, linebacker John Walters and Williams.

Workhorse Of The Year

Cecil Hurt, sports editor of *The Tuscaloosa News*, has designated Tide halfback Sherman Williams the workhorse of the year in the SEC. Indeed, Hurt wrote, Williams may be the workhorse of all time in his weight division.

In 1994 Williams carried the ball 291 times, shattering the Alabama record of 238 by Bobby Humphrey in 1987. In SEC history only Herschel Walker of Georgia and Charles Alexander of LSU, both big

backs, had more carries.

In fact, Williams came within one carry of running the ball as often as the entire University of Georgia team this season.

Senior Bowlers

The Citrus Bowl won't be the final game for a number of Alabama senior football players. In addition to the prospects of professional football for a handful of them, several will play in the Senior Bowl in Ladd Stadium in Mobile on January 21.

Among Crimson Tide players expected to play in the game are quarterback Jay Barker, halfback Sherman Williams, offensive lineman Jon Stevenson, defensive end Dameian Jeffries, cornerback Tommy Johnson and safety Willie Gaston. There is also a possibility that fullback Tarrant Lynch and/or strong safety Sam Shade would be added to the rosters.

Vallery In Texas

Former Alabama running back Dameian Vallery, who left the Tide squad last summer, has transferred to Division II Angelo State in Texas. Vallery came to Bama from MacArthur High School in Houston in 1993, but was redshirted and never played for the Tide.

Stephenson Honored

Former Alabama All-America center Dwight Stephenson, who went on to be considered one of the finest players in professional football (selected for the Pro Bowl six times in a career cut short by injury in his ninth NFL season with the Miami Dolphins) has been selected to the Dolphin Honor Roll. Stephenson, who is considered a sure bet for future induction into both the College Football Hall of Fame and the NFL Hall of Fame, played on two national championship teams at Alabama (1978 and

This Is January

In hopes of having this pre-Citrus Bowl issue of 'BAMA into the hands of our readers before the game on January 2, we went to press about 10 days earlier than normal.

Subscribers will receive a newsletter following the Citrus Bowl game against Ohio State and then the February issue of the magazine will be mailed the final week of January.

1979) and two Super Bowl champions

Newsome Inducted

Former Alabama great Ozzie Newsome was formally inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in a ceremony in New York earlier this month. Because Newsome is an assistant coach with the Cleveland Browns, who are trying to make the National Football League playoffs, he was unable to attend the black tie function. His former Alabama teammate, Marty Lyons, made his acceptance for him. Newsome was an All-America in his Bama career (1974-77) and was selected as Alabama's Player of the Decade by 'BAMA magazine readers and selected to Alabama's Team of the Century.

Caffey Returns

Senior Alabama basketball forward Jason Caffey made a quicker recovery than had been expected. Caffey, who suffered a broken foot in pre-season workouts and missed the first few Tide games, was not expected to return to action until the start of conference play when Bama goes to Vanderbilt January 4. However, Caffey returned to the lineup a month earlier than that, when Bama bested Virginia Commonwealth, 75-57, on December 3. In the next few weeks Caffey should become the 31st player in Alabama history to reach the career 1,000-point plateau.

The only Tider currently on the injured list is sophomore center Wade Kaiser, who underwent surgery on a tendon in his left foot in August. His status for this season is unknown.

Like UCLA?

Alabama's basketball program is not often compared to UCLA's, but Oscar Combs, publisher of *The Cats' Pause*, a publication covering Kentucky athletics, found a similarity when he covered Kentucky's

82-81 win over the Wildcats. Wrote Combs:

UCLA's basketball fans remind me a lot of the hoop fans at The University of Alabama. They rarely can be heard at the home games until the home team has the game safely put away in the final seconds.

Three For Three

Going into the holidays, Alabama's women's basketball team had played in three of its four regular season tournaments and won all three. Coach Rick Moody's team, now ranked fifth in the nation, won its own Sheraton Capstone Inn Classic, the University of California-Irvine Classic, and the University of Texas-Arlington Invitational. Additionally, senior All-America guard Niesa Johnson was voted most valuable player at all three tournaments. Only one other Alabama women's basketball player, Linda Burgess in 1990 and 1991, had three tournament MVP awards. Bama's next tournament is the St. John's Invitational in New York December 28-29.

Only once in Johnson's career has she not made a regular season all-tournament team, being selected 11 times in 12 tournaments. She has also been named to the all-tournament squads of the 1993 SEC Championship and the 1994 NCAA Midwest Regional.

Johnson has been joined by three other seniors who have made their first all-tournament honors. Carla Koonce was selected at the Cal-Irvine tournament, and both Marlene Stevenson and Nanae Daniels were named all tournament at Texas-Arlington.

Pierce Gets Head Job

Former Alabama baseball player and Assistant Coach Bobby Pierce has been chosen as the first baseball coach at Alabama-Huntsville. Pierce was a recruiter, hitting and outfield instructor, and third base coach under Barry

Shollenberger, who resigned effective at the end of last season. Pierce was formerly head coach at Chipola Junior College in Florida, where he posted a 259-95 record in seven seasons and won four conference championships. He was an All-Southeastern Conference outfielder for the Tide in 1980 and 1981.

Baseball Tickets

Alabama is now taking orders for baseball season tickets. Bama begins play February 18, hosting Middle Tennessee State. New Alabama Head Coach Jim Wells has a 31-game home schedule, including Southeastern Conference games with South Carolina, Florida, Ole Miss and Arkansas.

Single game tickets are \$4 each for adults, \$2 for students, but season tickets are available for \$75 for box seats and \$60 for upper level. There are also family plans and senior citizen plans. To order, call the Athletics Ticket Office in

Coleman Coliseum at (205) 348-6111.

Decision Supported

While discussion of Alabama's decision to kick the extra point when the Tide took a 22-17 lead over Florida in the Southeastern Conference Championship Game has died down, Alabama Head Coach Gene Stallings received some support for the decision from a former football great. Alabama Governor-Elect Fob James said he supported the decision. James made his remark during an orientation with state legislators held at The University in early December. "It was a logical call," said James, who starred at Auburn in the 1950s. "Alabama had won with defense all year. I'll ask for a resolution in defense of Coach Stallings."

James was introduced by University Chancellor Phillip Austin, who said James made "an unfortunate error in judgment" to become a star at the wrong university.



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1994-95 Alabama Winter Sports Schedules

Men's Basketball

Date	Opponent	Time
80	Croatia (exh.)	41
<i>Pre-Season NIT</i>		
(single elimination tournament)		
79	Kansas State	48
69	New Mexico State	86
75	Verich Reps (exh.)	62
75	@ Virginia Commonwealth	57
77	Florida International	54
Dec. 17	Florida A&M	1:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	Central Florida	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 22	@ Tulane (ESPN)	8:30 p.m.
<i>Otis Spunkmeyer Classic @ Oakland, Calif.</i>		
Dec. 28-	TCU	8 p.m.
Dec. 29	Columbia or California	8 or 10:30
Jan. 2	Central Connecticut State	TBA
Jan. 4	@ Vanderbilt	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 7	Virginia Military	1:30 p.m.
Jan. 11	@ Ole Miss	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 14	South Carolina (J-P)	2 p.m.
Jan. 17	LSU (ESPN)	8:30 p.m.
Jan. 21	Mississippi State (J-P)	2 p.m.
Jan. 24	@ Arkansas (ESPN)	8:30 p.m.
Jan. 28	@ Tennessee	3 p.m.
Feb. 1	Auburn (J-P)	7 p.m.
Feb. 4	Georgia (J-P)	2 p.m.
Feb. 7	Southern Miss	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 11	@ LSU	7 p.m.
Feb. 15	Arkansas (J-P)	7 p.m.
Feb. 18	@ Auburn	1:30 p.m.
Feb. 21	Kentucky (ESPN)	8:30 p.m.
Feb. 25	@ Florida (J-P)	2 p.m.
March 1	Ole Miss	7:30 p.m.
March 4	@ Mississippi State	7 p.m.
March 9	SEC Tournament	
March 12	@ Atlanta	

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Men's Swimming & Diving

Date	Opponent	Time
UA Score		Opp. Score
71	@ Kentucky	42
70	Louisville @ Lexington	43
193	Cincinnati @ Lexington	63
140	@ LSU	102
141	South Carolina	99
Rammer Jammer Invitational		
Alabama 832.5, Miami 680.5, Clemson 669, Northeast Louisiana 590.5, FSU 512.5		

Jan. 4	Clemson & NE Louisiana	TBA
Jan. 6	Northwestern	TBA
Jan. 9	Georgia	TBA
Jan. 14	Auburn	Noon
Jan. 20	@ Florida	TBA
Jan. 28	@ Tennessee	11 a.m.
Feb. 9-	SEC Civing Championships	
Feb. 11	@ Lexington	
Feb. 17-	SEC Swimming Championships	
Feb. 19	@ Columbia, S.C.	
March 4	Auburn Invitational	
March 9-	NCAA Zone Diving	
March 11	@ Lexington, Ky.	
March 23-	NCAA Championships	
March 25	@ Indianapolis, Indiana	

all times central

Women's Basketball

Date	Opponent	Time
103	Uralmash, Russia (exh.)	91
67	Athletes In Action (exh.)	42
<i>Alabama/Sheraton Capstone Classic</i>		
73	Villanova	57
90	Grambling	70
<i>California-Irvine Invitational @ Irvine, Calif.</i>		
74	Colorado State	62
105	Notre Dame	87
93	Arkansas	79
<i>Texas-Arlington Invitational @ Arlington, Texas</i>		
102	Lamar	50
99	Texas-Arlington	62
Dec. 19	Middle Tennessee State	5 p.m.
<i>St. John's Invitational @ Jamaica, N.Y.</i>		
Dec. 28	San Diego State	7 p.m.
Dec. 29	St. John's or North Carolina-Ashville	
Jan. 3	East Tennessee State	7 p.m.
Jan. 5	@ Maine	6:30 p.m.
Jan. 8	Vanderbilt (ESPN)	4 p.m.
Jan. 10	Illinois	7 p.m.
Jan. 15	@ Florida	1 p.m.
Jan. 18	@ Georgia	6:30 p.m.
Jan. 22	South Carolina	1:30 p.m.
Jan. 24	@ Auburn	7 p.m.
Jan. 28	@ LSU	3:30 p.m.
Jan. 31	Central Florida	7 p.m.
Feb. 5	Tennessee (SportsSouth)	1:30 p.m.
Feb. 7	@ Louisiana Tech	7 p.m.
Feb. 11	@ Kentucky	3 p.m.
Feb. 15	Alabama State	4:30 p.m.
Feb. 18	@ Mississippi State	7 p.m.
Feb. 25	Ole Miss	7 p.m.
Feb. 27	Tennessee State	7 p.m.
March 3-	SEC Tournament	
March 6	@ Chattanooga	

all times central

Women's Swimming & Diving

Date/	Opponent	Time/
UA Score		Opp. Score
65	@ Kentucky	48
70	Louisville @ Lexington	43
205	Cincinnati @ Lexington	86
138	@ LSU	105
Rammer Jammer Invitational		
Alabama 1058.5, Miami 641, Clemson 627.5, FSU 584		

Jan. 4	Clemson & NE Louisiana	TBA
Jan. 6	Northwestern	TBA
Jan. 9	Georgia	TBA
Jan. 13	Auburn	6 p.m.
Jan. 20	@ Florida	TBA
Jan. 27	@ Tennessee	7 p.m.
Feb. 9-	SEC Civing Championships	
Feb. 11	@ Lexington	
Feb. 17-	SEC Swimming Championships	
Feb. 19	@ Columbia, S.C.	
March 4	Auburn Invitational	
March 9-	NCAA Zone Diving	
March 11	@ Lexington, Ky.	
March 16-	NCAA Championships	
March 18	@ Austin, Texas	

all times central

Gymnastics

Date	Opponent	Time
Jan. 7	Meet The Team Exhibition	TBA
Jan. 13	@ Auburn	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 20	@ Penn State	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 20	Oregon State @ Penn St.	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 28	Kentucky	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 3	LSU	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 12	@ Georgia	2:30 p.m.
Feb. 18	Arizona State	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 18	Illinois State	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 26	@ SE Missouri State	2 p.m.
Feb. 26	Missouri at Cape Girardeau	2 p.m.
Mar. 4	Georgia	7:30 p.m.
Mar. 10	@ Florida	7:30 p.m.
Mar. 17	Auburn	7:30 p.m.
Mar. 25	SEC Championships @ Gainesville	
April 8	NCAA Regional Championships	
April 20-	NCAA Championships	
April 22	@ Athens, Ga.	

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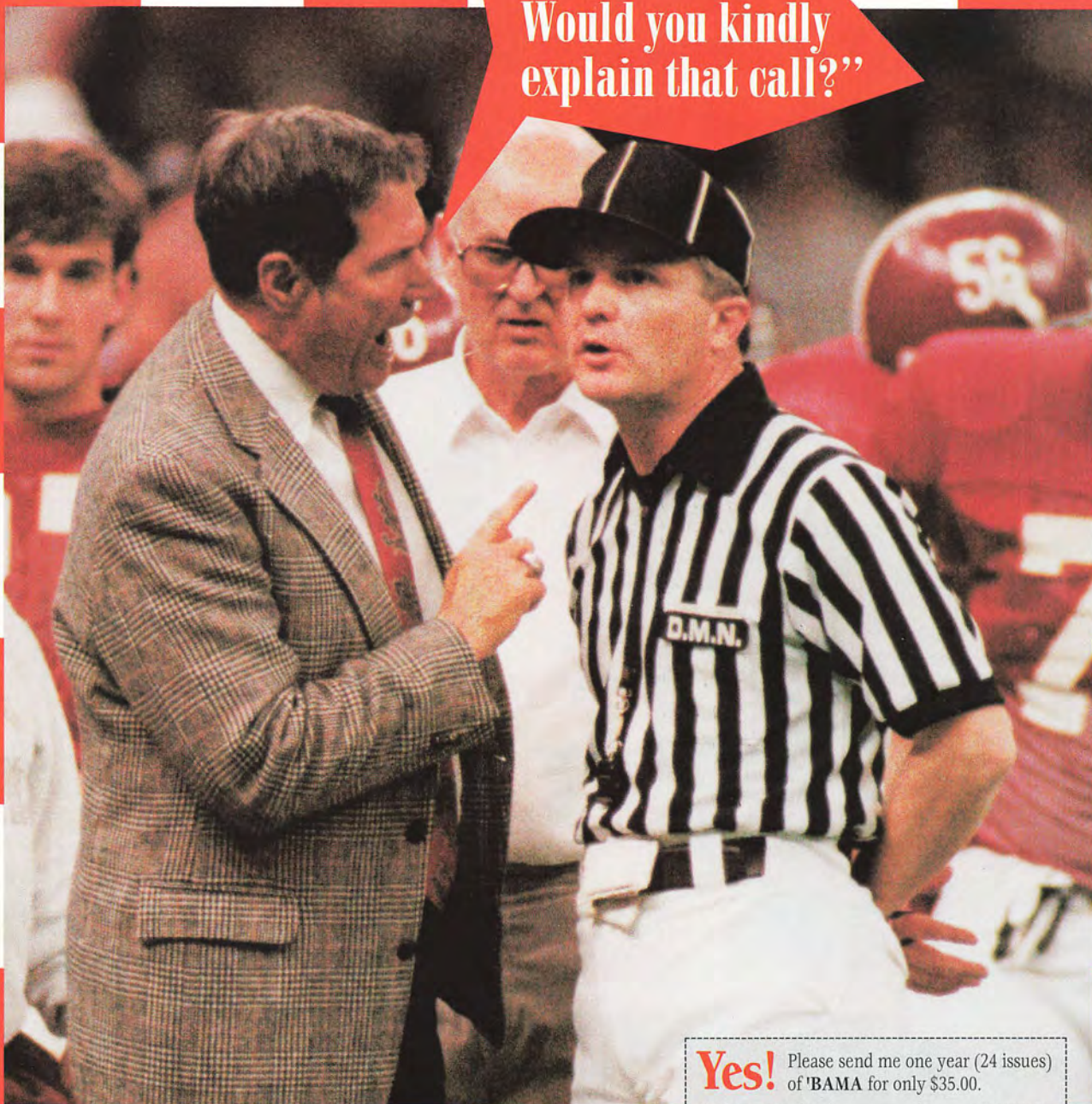
Men's Indoor Track

Date	Event	Result
Jan. 14	Saluki Invitational	
	@ Carbondale, Ill.	
Jan. 22	Barnett Bank Invitational	
	@ Gainesville	
Feb. 4	Wildcat Classic	
	@ Lexington	
Feb. 11	Illini Invitational	
	@ Urbana, Ill.	
Feb. 25-26	SEC Championships	
	@ Baton Rouge	
March 2	NCAA Qualifiers Meet	
	@ Gainesville	
March 4	USATF Championships	
	@ Atlanta	
March 10-11	NCAA Championships	
	@ Indianapolis, Ind.	

Women's Indoor Track

Date	Event	Result
Jan. 14	Saluki Invitational	
	@ Carbondale, Ill.	
Jan. 22	Barnett Bank Invitational	
	@ Gainesville	
Feb. 4	Wildcat Classic	
	@ Lexington	
Feb. 11	Illini Invitational	
	@ Urbana, Ill.	
Feb. 25-26	SEC Championships	
	@ Baton Rouge	
March 2	NCAA Qualifiers Meet	
	@ Gainesville	
March 4	USATF Championships	
	@ Atlanta	
March 10-11	NCAA Championships	
	@ Indianapolis, Ind.	

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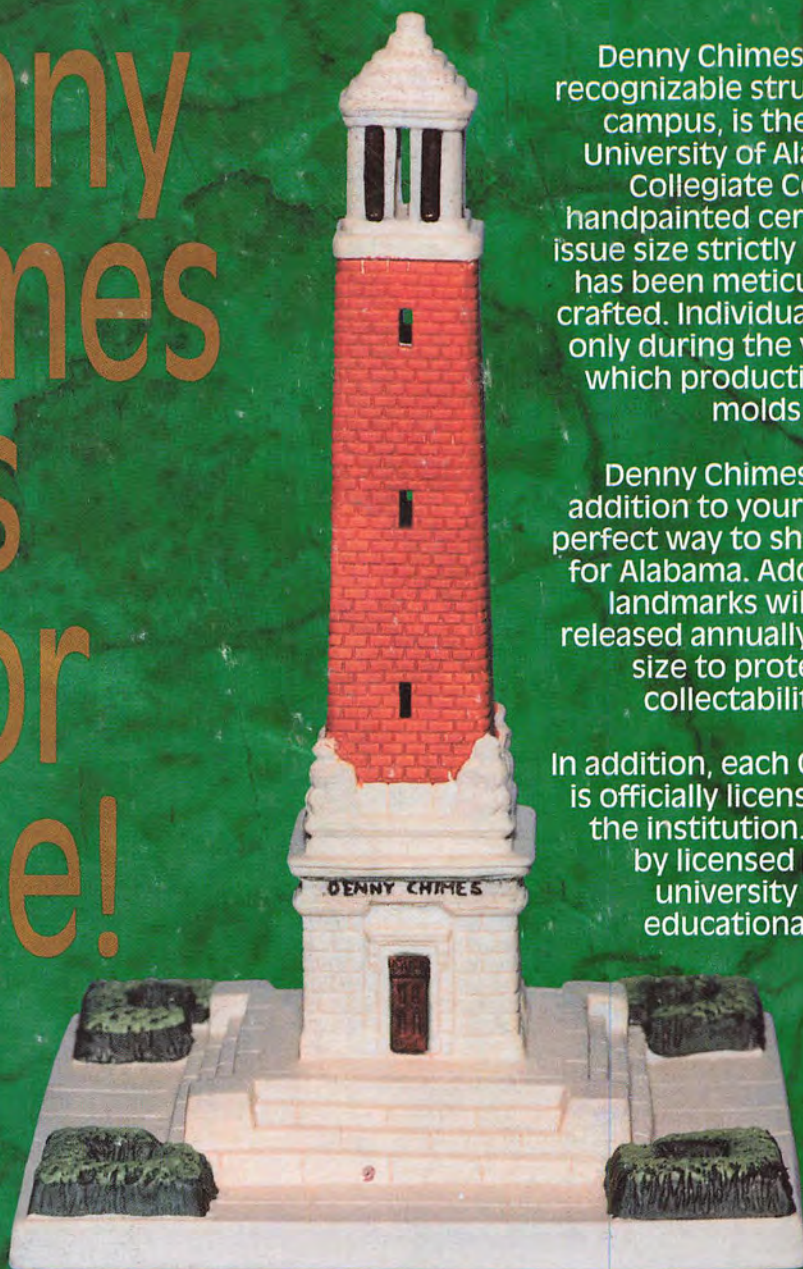
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